

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY, LEICESTER

**THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE IN NORWAY 1940-1945:
POLICY AND OPERATIONS IN THE STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL
CONTEXT**

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ABSTRACT

Between 1940 and 1945, the Special Operations Executive (SOE) carried out sabotage and organised resistance across occupied Europe. There have, however, only been a small number of scholarly studies of SOE's activities, and no specific examination of its involvement in occupied Norway. This thesis, therefore, is the first multi-archival, international, and academic analysis of its policy and operations in this country and the influences that shaped them. The proposition is that it was the changing contribution of both SOE and Norway within the wider strategic context in Europe that was the predominant factor behind its plans for this theatre, and other factors, although material, were of secondary importance. These included SOE's relationship with the Norwegian government-in-exile and the resistant movements that emerged in response to the occupation, especially Milorg, which set out to form an underground army within the country. As well as collaboration with the other clandestine organisations and regular armed forces that had a military involvement in Norway.

Through an examination of these contextual influences this work argues that between 1940 and 1945, in step with its original strategic role, SOE's policy for Norway consisted of a short-term objective, which through activities such as sabotage was to help undermine German fighting strength, and a long-term objective of forming a secret army. These aims could not, however, be achieved or implemented without the co-operation of the Norwegian military authorities and Milorg, who provided most of the manpower, and the assistance of the other military agencies that often operated alongside SOE. From the beginning, therefore, SOE deliberately set out to work with all these parties, but always on the basis that any joint activity was undertaken in accordance with British and Allied interests.

This meant that SOE's operations in Norway were ultimately the result of a blend of influences. It was, however, this country's subordinate and peripheral position in relation to the main thrust of Allied strategy in Europe that was the crucial factor. The constructive relationship that the organisation eventually had with the Norwegian authorities and Milorg was also important because it meant that SOE both received the support it required and managed to ensure Allied control over special operations in this theatre. It was, therefore, a relationship that was beneficial and rather than undermining SOE's plans, it underpinned them and guaranteed they remained in step with strategic and military requirements.

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My decision to examine SOE policy and operations in Norway was prompted by not just my interest in the history of the country during the Second World War but also by Professor Patrick Salmon at Newcastle University who took the time to reply to my correspondence and suggested that it was a topic that required and deserved attention.

A large part of my time has been spent working on the extensive SOE material at *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* (the Resistance Museum) in Oslo. During that time I received unstinting support from Ivar Kraglund, Frode Færøy, Arnfinn Moland, and especially Anne Karin Sønsteby, who always with a smile responded to my requests for files and helped me locate important material. Working at the museum gave me the opportunity to meet several Norwegian resistance figures including Gunnar Sønsteby, with whom I had several enjoyable conversations. It also gave me the chance to encounter other Norwegian researchers and historians, such as Berit Nøkleby who has regularly responded to my enquiries, and kindly supplied me with some valuable material, including her excellent study of SIS. I would like to extend my thanks to all of these people and the Research Council of Norway, which provided substantial funding for my work in Oslo. Lastly, I must mention my family in Norway, who regularly helped by bringing over to Britain many of the key Norwegian publications that have been so important for my work and which are sadly unavailable in this country.

I would like to thank Professor Christopher Duffy whom, over many cups of coffee at 'Fortnum and Masons' gave me advice and encouragement in the early stages of my work. It was also through Christopher that I was able to get in touch with Mark Seaman, until recently the SOE historian at the Imperial War Museum. Mark's knowledge and his willingness to answer my questions and to take the time to discuss and debate issues with me have been a great help. Duncan Stuart, who was the SOE Advisor at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, also assisted by providing me with important documents and detail from SOE's personal files, which have only just been released into the Public Records Office at Kew. My two supervisors, Dr. David Ryan and Dr. H. P. Willmott have also been a great support, not just through reading my work but by putting forward valuable thoughts and insights that have helped in its development.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACAS (ops)	Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Operations)
ACNS (H)	Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Home)
ACO	Advisor on Combined Operations
ACOS	Admiral Commanding the Orkneys and Shetlands
AI	air intelligence (London)
AI 10	cover name for SOE
ALFN	Allied Land Forces Norway
ANCC	Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee
AL	air liaison section in SOE
AT	<i>Arbeidstjenesten</i> (The Labour Services) in Norway
B.org	<i>Bedriftsorganisasjonen</i> (The Industrial Organisation), a resistance organisation in occupied Norway
BSS	Bayswater security section
C	head of SIS
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
CCO	Chief of Combined Operations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
COHQ	Combined Operations headquarters
COS	Chiefs of Staff Committee
COSSAC	Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander (Designate)
CS	Sir Cambell Stuart's propaganda department, part of the Foreign Office
D	sabotage section of SIS
DCO	Directorate of Combined Operations
DDOD(I)	Deputy Director, Operations Division (Irregular) at the Admiralty
D/F	direction finding, the action of using an aerial to determine the direction of incoming radio waves
DK	<i>Distriktskommandoer</i> (District Commanders)
DKN	<i>Distriktskommando Nord</i> (the District Commander for northern Norway)

DKT	<i>Distrikstkommando Trøndelag</i> (the District Commander for the county of Trøndelag)
DKØ	<i>Districtskommando Øst</i> (the District Commander for eastern Norway)
DMI	Director of Military Intelligence
DNA	<i>Det norske arbeiderparti</i> (the Norwegian Labour Party)
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
DSIR	Department for Scientific and Industrial Research
DZ	dropping zone
EH	Electra House, the propaganda department under Sir Cambell Stuart
FA	<i>Forsvarsstabens krigstidsarkiv</i> 1940-1945, Oslo (the Defence Staff war archives)
FANY	First Aid Nursing Yeomanry
FD	<i>Forsvarsdepartementet</i> (the Norwegian Ministry of Defence)
FD/E	<i>Forsvarsdepartementet Etterretningskontor</i> (the Norwegian Ministry of Defence Intelligence Office)
FFK	<i>Flyvåpnenes Felleskommando</i> (the Royal Norwegian Air Force Joint Command)
FO	Foreign Office
FO	<i>Forsvarets Overkommando</i> , (The Norwegian Defence High Command)
FO II	The Norwegian Defence High Command Intelligence Department
FO IV	The Norwegian Defence High Command, Department no. IV
FO-H	The Norwegian Defence High Command, Home Front Office
FO, Rapport	report on the Norwegian High Command's Activities outside Norway, 1942 – 1945
Gestapo	<i>die Geheime Staatspolizei</i>
GC & CS	Government Code and Cipher School (Bletchley Park, Buckinghamshire)
Grepo	<i>Det norske (NS) Grensepoliti under okkupasjonen</i> (the Norwegian Border Police during the occupation)
GS (R)	General Staff (Research), department in the War Office responsible for researching aspects of tactics and operations.
HHI	<i>Hjemmefrontens Historieinstitutt's arkiv</i> (The Home Fronts Historical Archive, Oslo, Norway)

HL	<i>Hjemmefrontens Ledelse</i> (The Home Front Leadership in Norway)
HOK	<i>Hærens Overkommando</i> (The Royal Norwegian Army High Command)
HS	<i>Hjemmestyrkene</i> (The Home Forces)
Innst.	<i>Instilling fra Undersøkelseskomisjonen av 1945, utgitt av Stortinget</i> (report of the fact-finding commission of 1945, published by the Norwegian Parliament)
Inst.	<i>Universitettets historiske institutt, Oslo</i> (The University of Oslo Historical Institute)
ISRB	Inter –Services Research Bureau (cover name for SOE)
ISSU	Inter-Services Signals Unit (cover name for SOE)
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JP	Joint Planning Committee
KK	<i>Koordinasjonskomitéen</i> (the Co-ordination Committee)
<i>Kompani Linge</i>	the Linge Company
Kripo	<i>die Kriminalpolizei</i> (The German Criminal Police)
LCS	London Controlling Section (responsible for deception)
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare
MGB	motor gunboat
MI	Military Intelligence, [London], specifically:
MI5	responsible for home security
MI6	responsible for intelligence
MI9	responsible for escape
Milorg	<i>Militærorganisasjonen</i> (the military resistance organisation in Norway)
Mi II	<i>Militærkontoret II</i> (the Military Office at the Royal Norwegian Legation in Stockholm responsible for matters of intelligence)
Mi IV	<i>Militærkontoret IV</i> (The Military Office at the Royal Norwegian Legation in Stockholm responsible for contact with Milorg and SOE)
MI (R)	Military Intelligence (Research), department of the War Office
MO1(SP)	cover name for SOE
MOI	Ministry of Information
MTB	motor torpedo boat

NHM	<i>Norges hjemmefrontmuseum</i> (Norway's Resistance Museum, Oslo, Norway)
NIC (1)	The Norwegian Independent Company no. 1
NID	Naval Intelligence Department
NID(Q)	cover name for the Navy Section of SOE, which was in form part of NID
NID(C)	cover name for the Navy Section of SIS, which was also in form part of NID
NKP	<i>Norges kommunistiske parti</i> (the Norwegian Communist Party)
Notraship	Norwegian Shipping and Trade Mission
NRK	<i>Norsk Rikskringkasting</i> (the Norwegian State Broadcasting Corporation)
NS	<i>Nasjonal Samling</i> (the Norwegian Nazi party)
OKW	<i>das Oberkommando der Wehrmacht</i> (the German Military High Command)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services, USA
PRO	Public Records Office
PWE	Political Warfare Executive
RAF	Royal Air Force
RNorN	Royal Norwegian Navy
RNVR	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
RN	Royal Navy
ROH	<i>Regjeringen og hjemmefronten under krigen, aktstykker utgitt av Stortinget</i> (correspondence between the government and Home Front during the occupation published by the Norwegian parliament in 1948)
<i>Rådet</i>	Milorg's central council
SAS	Special Air Service
SCAEF	Supreme Commander, Allied expeditionary Force
Scotco	Scottish Command
SD	<i>der Sicherheitsdienst</i> (the German Security Service)
SFHQ	Special Force Headquarters
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force
Sipo	<i>Sicherheitspolizei</i> (the German Security Police)

SOK	<i>Sjøforsvarets Overkommando</i> (the Royal Norwegian Navy High Command)
Sipo u. SD	<i>die Sicherheitspolizei und der Sicherheitsdienst</i> (the German Security Police and Security Service)
SIS	the Secret Intelligence Service, an alternative name for MI6. (See page v)
SL	<i>Sentralledelsen i Milorg</i> (the Central Leadership of Milorg)
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SO	Special Operations section of OSS, the USA's equivalent of SOE
SO2	the department of SOE responsible for operations prior to the summer of 1941
SOE/SO	mixed SOE/OSS group working in northwest Europe
Stapo	<i>det Norske (NS) Statspoliti</i> (the Norwegian Nazi Party State Police)
STS	special training school
2A	Norwegian underground intelligence organisation
U-boat	German submarine (<i>Unterseeboat</i>)
UK 1945	<i>Undersøkelseskommissjonen av 1945</i> (The Norwegian Parliamentary fact finding commission of 1945)
USAAF	United States of America Air Force
VCNS	Vice Chief of Naval Staff
W/T	wireless telegraphy
XU	Norwegian underground intelligence organisation

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¹ Compiled from the following sources: 1) *Fodor's Scandinavia*, (New York: Fodors, 2002), p. 347. 2) *NAF: Veibok 98*, (Oslo: Norges Automobil Forbund, 1998), p. 608. 3) A. Moland, *Over grensen?* inside the back cover.

INTRODUCTION

During the early hours of 9 April 1940 German forces occupied a number of strategically important towns along the Norwegian coast from Narvik in the north to Oslo in the south. Allied forces began arriving in Norway from the middle of April, but what turned out to be a disastrous campaign was over when the last Allied troops left Narvik on 8 June and the Norwegian units that remained in the country capitulated two days later. This left Norway occupied for the next five years by enemy forces that at the time of the German surrender in May 1945 totalled over 350,000 military and civilian personnel.¹ The Norwegian government arrived in Britain on 10 June 1940 to continue the fight ‘to regain Norway’s independence’,² and as Norway’s constitutional and legitimate authority the government-in-exile spent the next five years endeavouring to mobilise all possible resources, including those of its allies, to win back the freedom of its country.³ On 7 June 1945 King Haakon VII, Norway’s first monarch after its separation from Sweden in 1905, arrived back home five years after departing into exile with the Norwegian government.

Although the brief Allied sojourn in Norway in the spring of 1940 was a failure it did not result in Britain turning its back on the country, either strategically or militarily. Between 1940 and 1945 the Royal Navy (RN), Royal Air Force (RAF), Combined Operations, and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), were all active in this theatre. Moreover, soon after its conception in July 1940, a new organisation also began to take an interest in the country; this was the Special Operations Executive (henceforward SOE). SOE was set up, according to its founding charter, ‘to co-ordinate all action, by way of subversion and sabotage, against the enemy overseas’, and therefore over the coming months it gradually subsumed those organisations, such as Section D and MI (R), which had previously been responsible for such activities.⁴

¹ At the time of the German surrender there were eleven divisions in Norway (192,500 men), with 137,520 of this total in the north. The other services, civilians, semi-military, such as the Todt organisation that was responsible for the construction of large military and civilian projects and those employed by the Wehrmacht totalled 165,200. Public Record Office (henceforth PRO): ‘Report on the visit to Allied land forces by MO 3 colonel, 14-18 June 1945’ in WO 216/568.

² Proclamation by Johan Nygaardsvold, the Norwegian Prime Minister, which was broadcast over Tromsø radio on 9 June 1940, cited in A. Moland, *Over Grensen?* (Oslo: Orion Forlag, 1999), pp. 24-25.

³ Olav Riste, *London regjeringa: Norge i krigsalliansen*, vol. I, *prøvetid 1940-1942*, (Oslo, Det Norske Samlaget, 2nd edition, 1995), p. 20.

⁴ The War Cabinet approved the Charter on 22 July 1940. It states that Section D, M.I.(R), and Electra House (EH), a propaganda department under the Foreign Office, would all be placed under SOE’s

With responsibility to the Minister for Economic Warfare, over the next five years SOE sent over 500 agents into Norway to carry out a range of operations that included *coup de main* attacks, sabotage, assassination, and attempts to organise an underground guerrilla army.⁵

This thesis is an examination of SOE's policy and operations in Norway between 1940 and 1945 within the context of the major strategic and political influences that shaped them. It uses archival material from both Britain and Norway, including SOE files at the Public Records Office (PRO) in Kew, West London, which from 1993 have been gradually opened up to researchers. Unlike with France or the Low Countries⁶ a specific scholarly history of SOE in Norway has not been published. There are several British publications that contain chapters or sections on Norway, but these have not made use of the extensive SOE material in Oslo. They consist of either a short narrative of aspects of SOE activity, such as its use of the Shetlands Base, or an outline of some of its many operations, and therefore are not detailed and wide-ranging analyses.⁷ Studies of the Norwegian government in exile and the Home Front⁸ have examined the impact of SOE's involvement in Norway upon Anglo-Norwegian relations and the development of resistance, but again are founded on the use of single archival material or were unable to use the recently released SOE files at Kew.⁹ There are also many anecdotal accounts, memoirs or recollections written by ex-Norwegian SOE operatives that afford an insight into the human element of working underground in an occupied country and provide

wing. See: PRO: WP (40) 27, SOE Charter, 19 July 1940, in CAB 66/10.

⁵ The SOE's Norwegian section history has a total of 542 agents whilst a recently released SOE Headquarters file has a total of 592 officers and men. Only three British recruits and no women went into Norway on behalf of SOE. Both are gross totals. PRO: HS2/175, Norwegian Section History – Appendices, Appendix B, 'A Short History of the Linge Company' and file HS8/280, 'British Military Aid to the Occupied Territories'.

⁶ M. R. D. Foot, *SOE in France*, (London: HMSO, 1966) and M. R. D. Foot, *SOE in the Low Countries* (London: St. Ermin's Press, 2001).

⁷ Charles Cruickshank, *SOE in Scandinavia*, (Oxford: OUP, 1986). W. J. M. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1945*, (London: St. Ermin's Press, 2000). M. R. D. Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, (London: Pimlico, 1999).

⁸ The expression Home Front was the collective term used during the occupation for all resistance against the German occupation and *Nasjonal Samling* (NS), the Norwegian Nazi party. The word was also used to describe all patriotic Norwegians in occupied Norway. See: H. F. Dahl [et al], *Norsk krigsleksikon 1940-1945*, (Oslo: J.W. Cappelen, 1995), p. 175.

⁹ Sverre Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene: hovedtrekk av den militære motstanden under okkupasjonen*, (Oslo: Aschehoug, 1959) and Olav Riste, *London regjeringa: Norge i krigsalliansen*, vol. I, *prøvetid 1940-1942*: vol. II, *vegen heim 1942-1945*, (Oslo, Det Norsk Samlaget, 2nd edition, 1995).

important background on some of SOE's actions. They do not, however, impart much information on the wider influences behind the operations.¹⁰

Consequently, there is a gap in the literature for an international, academic, and multi-archival history of SOE in Norway, which rather than being a straightforward narrative will be an analysis of the many influences behind the organisation's policy and operations. This thesis also for the first time brings together and examines the many diverse issues surrounding SOE interest in this theatre. It will, therefore, unlike previous publications, present a single and overarching interpretation, and through using the most recently released material and a combination of British and Norwegian archives, re-appraise and offer new explanations of many aspects of this organisation's involvement in occupied Norway.

There were several factors that determined SOE policy, defined here as its plan of action and statement of aims and ideals, and ultimately the nature, mix, and extent of its operations. The major significance of this work, however, is the contention that it was SOE's and especially Norway's role and significance within the wider strategic context in the war against Germany in Europe, that was the principal influence behind its activity in this theatre between 1940 and 1945.¹¹ Political factors, defined in this case as relations with the Norwegian government-in-exile and the 'official' military resistance, *militær organisasjonen* (henceforth Milorg),¹² as well as the nature of the occupation of Norway, along with collaborative factors, SOE's relationship with the other armed forces and organisations operating in this theatre, also had an impact. But in the case of Norway, although important, they remained secondary to strategic factors.

¹⁰ An example is three publications written by men involved in the attacks against heavy water production in Norway. Knut Haukelid, *Skis Against the Atom*, (London: William Kimber, 1954); Jomar Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork 1940-1945*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1985); Jens Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork: vinterkrig på Hardangervidda*, (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 2nd edition, 1993).

¹¹ Strategy is 'the use that is made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy', whilst the 'role of grand strategy... is to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war – the goal defined by fundamental policy'. See: Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 17, and Basil H. Liddell-Hart, 'Strategy: The Indirect Approach', (London: 1967), pp. 335-336, cited in Gray, *Modern Strategy*, p. 18.

¹² From the autumn of 1940 a clandestine organisation (Milorg) began to develop in Norway with the aim of organising an underground army that could contribute to the eventual liberation of the country through supporting a landing by Allied forces. In November 1941, Milorg was recognised by the Norwegian authorities in London and became not only part of its armed forces but the 'official' military resistance in Norway. By May 1945, it constituted a force of around 40,000.

SOE was conceived in the summer of 1940 when Britain was militarily isolated and weak after the rapid collapse of France. Within this context it became part of a British forward strategy that was built on the conviction that before major land operations against the German army in northwest Europe could recommence, its fighting strength had to be significantly reduced. The British believed this even after the entry of the United States of America (USA) into the war. SOE's contribution would be to carry out sabotage and subversion, which would undermine German fighting capacity and morale and help tie down its forces in peripheral theatres away from the main battlefronts. It was, therefore, part of an attritional strategy that set out to wear down Axis power. In addition, but over the longer-term, through the supply of arms, organisation and training it would harness the potential for resistance in the occupied countries and create secret armies that would support Allied landings as part of an eventual liberation of Europe. SOE's military contribution varied, however, across the various theatres of operations. Its role in Greece in 1943, which was close to the Allied campaigns in North Africa and Italy, was in many ways different from Norway, which at the time was marginal to the main course of events. Moreover its significance changed as the war progressed. After the USA entered the conflict in December 1941, with its vast resources, the contribution of secret armies was finally demoted to a strategically and militarily far more subordinate and supportive role.¹³

By the end of 1940, SOE's policy for Norway reflected the military responsibilities that had been assigned to this new organisation. In the short-term it would undertake *coup de main* operations, sabotage, assist raids and strategic bombing, and carry out covert, 'black' propaganda. Over the longer-term it would prepare a secret underground army based on local resistance groups that would be organised and preserved in readiness to support a landing by regular forces at a time determined by Britain and its allies. At a local level these two objectives would be kept separate, although within the wider context they were inseparable. The aim of SOE's short-term activities in Norway and across Europe was to help create the

¹³ See: David Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, with Documents*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983); B. P. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy 1940-1943*, books I & II, (Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1998-1999); J. R. M. Butler (ed.), 'Grand Strategy' vols. I-VI, in *History of the Second World War*, (London: HMSO, 1956-1976); M. Matloff, 'Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945', in P. Paret, (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, (Oxford: OUP, 1986), pp. 677-690.

conditions that would allow Allied forces supplemented by local secret armies to undertake a final and decisive land offensive against Germany.

This combination of short and long-term aims remained in place and was the template for SOE operations in Norway for the rest of the war. The military significance of these objectives altered, however, as SOE and Norway's position and role within the wider European context changed. The organisation of a secret army, for example, was closely linked to British plans for a landing in Norway. These, however, never came to fruition and it was not until the final stages of the war, after the launch of Operation Overlord, the invasion of northwest Europe that preparations for Norway's liberation really got underway. Only then, after years of shortages, were significant resources made available to enable the establishment of an armed and trained underground army.

Political factors also influenced SOE's plans. By operating within the occupied countries across Europe, SOE inevitably became involved in internal issues and came into contact with their political representatives, primarily the governments in exile or other groups that were often based in London. In June 1942, in recognition of SOE's close links with the exile governments, the British Chiefs of Staff Committee appointed it as the official co-ordinating authority through which these governments were instructed to work on matters of sabotage and subversion.¹⁴

Furthermore, for SOE to operate effectively in Norway it had to work with members of the Norwegian government in exile and the indigenous military resistance organisations, especially Milorg, which meant that it was regularly subject to external political pressure. Only Norwegian recruits had the required language skills and could cope effectively with the extreme climatic and topographic conditions found in Norway. To secure access to these potential operatives, it was necessary to make contact with the relevant figures within the Norwegian government and its military authorities in London. To form a secret army that remained subservient to British requirements SOE also had to get in direct touch with and bring under its influence the local resistance organisations in Norway, including Milorg.

SOE was not, however, faced with a fragmented and unstable political background in Norway, something that distorted and complicated its efforts in other occupied countries. The nature of the German occupation ultimately gave rise to a

¹⁴ PRO: copy of memorandum addressed to General Sikorski entitled, 'Subversive Activity in the Occupied Territories', by A. F. Brooke, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee, 2 June 1942, in HS7/2.

largely organised and co-ordinated resistance movements that had close links with their government in London. The Norwegian government in exile also had the authority, both domestically and internationally, to defend and pursue its country's national interests, which it eventually decided could best be done through collaboration with its allies.¹⁵

Finally, modern war has increasingly become a 'joint' effort',¹⁶ and British and Allied strategy as it affected Norway was a combined military endeavour involving several organisations such as the RN, RAF, Combined Operations, SIS, and the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Therefore, SOE did not act alone and its policy reflected an understanding that the organisation would have to co-operate with these other agencies as part of a broad military front that set out to attack economic and military targets within the country. Consequently, its ability to collaborate was a further important factor in determining the nature, extent and success of its activities in this theatre.

Although SOE's policy and ultimately its operations in Norway were shaped by important strategic, political, and collaborative influences, the eventual outcome of its activities was often decided by another set of more straightforward factors. These included the extreme weather conditions that regularly occurred in the North Sea, especially during the winter months, and the topography and demography of Norway, which meant that with the exception of the area around Oslo the arrival of a stranger in the small, isolated communities was obvious to both the local population and eventually the local police. These elements all imposed a significant constraint on what SOE was ultimately able to achieve in this theatre. Having a set of aims and objectives was one thing, being able to carry them out in a heavily occupied country proved far more difficult.

Through using a combination of British and Norwegian archives, some only recently opened, this thesis will offer a new perspective on SOE operations in Norway. It will also challenge previous interpretations of the relationship between this organisation and both the Norwegian authorities and Milorg. Moreover, new historical detail will be revealed and some aspects of SOE's best known operations, such as the actions against the Norsk Hydro heavy water plant in southern Norway, will be re-evaluated. It will not, however, be possible to examine all of the many

¹⁵ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I., p. 20, 72-94.

¹⁶ Gray, *Modern Strategy*, p. 163.

SOE operations. Therefore, as an important addendum to the main text of this work, a series of appendices have been produced that for the first time attempt to synthesise all the available archival material on SOE into detailed chronologies and lists of not only its operations but also of the staff and military units that were behind them. This will provide an important database for future historians.

Historiography

This thesis examines the impact of strategic, political, and collaborative factors on SOE activity in Norway. The effect of all these factors together has never before been extensively examined within one publication. Moreover, many of the works that include some consideration of SOE in Norway were produced several years ago and a large amount of new material, both primary and secondary has since become available to historians. In order to provide a wide and up to date analyse of the many issues surrounding these contextual influences this thesis therefore uses a huge range of both British and Norwegian publications that cover a wide gamut of topics, not just SOE. Consequently, for the sake of clarity the historiography will be divided into a series of categories dealing with the predominant debates within each. It will begin with strategic issues, move on to SOE, and conclude with a broad category that encompasses the Norwegian political context, which includes the government in exile, the occupation, and Milorg and its relationship with SOE. There will naturally be a small number of books that cut across the categories, and therefore some works will be referred to on more than one occasion.

The contribution made by SOE in Norway during the Second World War was influenced by the development of British and then Allied strategy in Western Europe, which was in turn shaped by British and American doctrine and ultimately the relationship between the two. British strategy has variously been defined as ‘peripheral’, ‘indirect’, ‘Mediterranean’, and ‘opportunistic’.¹⁷ Michael Howard and Brian Bond, in their work on British defence policy between the wars, put forward the political and imperialistic reasons for Britain’s interest in an indirect strategy. Bond argues that the relegation of the British army to an imperial policing role between the

¹⁷ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 2; Matloff, ‘Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945’, in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 679; Michael Howard, *The Mediterranean Strategy in the Second World War*, (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1966), p. 36.

wars, led to the series of defeats between 1939 and 1942. Both claim that a British continental commitment emerged only in the spring of 1939, but as Howard points out this required a continental strategy and that owing to British unpreparedness and the defeats of 1940 this was by necessity an indirect strategy. Howard describes the British approach as ‘gallant’ but ultimately dependent on support from the USA, which provided the resources for the final offensive.¹⁸ David Stafford and other historians follow a similar line arguing that Britain’s initial strategy, which emerged at the end of the 1930s, was to rely on the larger French army to take the main military burden whilst it would apply economic pressure through indirect means to weaken Germany from within, causing it eventually to crumble.¹⁹

From June 1941, however, Britain fought the European war in the company of great power allies, the Soviet Union and a few months later the USA. The nature and development of Allied grand strategy from December 1941, the conflict between the different strategic doctrines of Britain and the USA, has been the source of an ongoing debate amongst historians for several decades. At issue has been the relationship between a British ‘indirect approach’ and an ‘American theory of war of mass and concentration’.²⁰ It is impossible, within the limited confines of this work, to go into the detail of this debate, but as strategic developments were so important in shaping the nature of special operations in Norway it is important to outline some of the major milestones.²¹

The argument over the relationship between British and American approaches began as early as the 1940s, although it was the early 1950s before the first major works began to appear. In his publication entitled, *The Struggle for Europe* published in 1952, Chester Wilmot contrasts British and American strategy in terms of a missed political opportunity, arguing that the abandonment of a British Mediterranean strategy in favour of the American direct strategy resulted in the Red Army having a free road in southeast Europe.²² Winston Churchill describes the British approach,

¹⁸ Brian Bond, *British Military Policy Between the Two World Wars*, (Oxford: OUP, 1980) and Michael Howard, *The Continental Commitment: The Dilemma of British Defence Policy in the Era of the Two World Wars*, (London: Temple Smith, 1972).

¹⁹ Howard, *The Continental Commitment*, p. 94. N. Gibbs, ‘Grand Strategy’, vol. I, in Butler, (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, p. 657-667, cited in Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 10-11.

²⁰ Matloff, ‘Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945’, in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 685.

²¹ For a more detailed and a recent analysis of the historiography on Allied grand strategy in Europe and the conflict between the British and American approaches see: Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 1-17.

²² Chester Wilmot, *The Struggle for Europe*, (London: Collins, 1952).

founded on the country's military weakness and isolation from the summer of 1940, as a process of weakening the enemy through a combination of indirect methods, such as economic blockade, strategic bombing, and tightening the ring through tactical offensives on the periphery, concluded by a final offensive on the continent of Europe.²³ This debate intensified when the British and American 'official' histories appeared. The British view, expounded in the series entitled *Grand Strategy*, and which largely follows Churchill is that this British three pronged strategy of attrition emerged after the fall of France and was followed consistently until 1943 when it gradually became subservient to the dominant American view of decisive concentration.²⁴ The American 'official' histories, which have been described as offering a more 'sophisticated description'²⁵ of the development of Allied grand strategy maintain that after a period when British ideas prevailed by the end of 1943 coalition policy had shifted back toward the American view.²⁶ R. M. Leighton argues that the two strategies were eventually blended into 'a pragmatic compromise', and that Operation Overlord, the invasion of northwest Europe, was a 'logical consummation' of 'closing and tightening the ring about Hitler's Europe'.²⁷ Michael Howard in his book on the Mediterranean strategy makes a similar assertion. He dismisses Wilmot's case for operations in the Mediterranean, arguing British strategy was primarily driven by a desire to weaken Germany before undertaking operations in northwest Europe and that Britain never opposed the concept of a concentration of force.²⁸

Maurice Matloff argues that Britain's 'peripheral' and 'indirect' strategy was forced upon the country after the defeat of France, and because of sensitivity to huge manpower losses in the First World War. It was a process of softening up Germany, which would be completed by a final campaign resulting in the destruction of German

²³ W. S. Churchill, 'The Grand Alliance', vol. III in *The Second World War*, (London: Cassell & Co, 1948-1953), p. 585; Stafford, *British and European Resistance*, pp. 2-3; Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 3.

²⁴ Butler (ed.), 'Grand Strategy' vols. I-VI, in *History of the Second World War*. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p.5.

²⁵ Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p.5.

²⁶ See particularly: M. Matloff & E.M. Snell, *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare, 1941-1942 & 1943-1944*, (Washington: OCMH, 1953 and 1959); Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 6; Matloff, 'Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945', in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 691-692.

²⁷ R. M. Leighton, 'Overlord Revisited: an Interpretation of American Strategy in the European War 1942-1944', *The American Historical Review*, vol. LXVI, (4), July 1963, pp. 919-937.

²⁸ Howard, *The Mediterranean Strategy in the Second World War*, pp. 69-71 and Wilmot, *The Struggle for Europe*, p. 715.

forces in northwest Europe. This compared with the American view that Germany's defeat could only be registered by a campaign in northwest Europe. In other words was it 'to be a "power drive" or "mop-up"?' Ultimately, the 'final strategy against Germany was a compromise between American and British views'.²⁹

Another view is that the Americans saw a cross-Channel effort as 'essential' to the defeat of Germany, whilst the British believed it should only occur once the defeat of Germany was 'assured'.³⁰ T. Ben-Moshe also argues that the British, particularly Churchill, in fear of defeat in France, wished to see a German collapse, not just a weakening, before a major landing in Normandy.³¹ More recently, a detailed analysis re-defines British grand strategy as a process of 'wear down', eroding 'German power by a combination of bombing, blockade, raids, subversion and sabotage, peripheral campaigns, and a *coup de grâce* assault'. It was a strategy that, although borrowed from the old concept of economic pressure, was modified after the defeat of France in 1940. From this point it was 'what must not be done: the Allies must not seek decisive battle against the main enemy force until he was no longer able to mount a formidable campaign', that prevailed. In the meantime this strategy would provide a framework in which Britain could move forward whilst building a stronger coalition. The author argues that the 'wear down' concept remained intact, although modified by changing circumstances, through to the end of 1943. By this time, however, American strength began to dominate the partnership and the 'Americans felt strong enough to confront the Germans, and the British themselves agreed the sooner the war was won the better'.³²

Although the historiography on Allied grand strategy in Europe is significant, this is not the case for Norway and its contribution in the war against Germany. Norway receives little attention in the 'official' histories, which is perhaps a reflection of its perceived value. Mention is made of two proposed landings in the country, Operations Ajax and Jupiter, largely in the context of pressure from Churchill to force them through against the wishes of the Chiefs of Staff (COS).³³ The most important

²⁹ Matloff, 'Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945', in Paret, (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 679, 688, 690-691.

³⁰ H. P. Willmott, *June 1944*, (Poole: Blandford Press, 1984), p. 20.

³¹ T. Ben-Moshe, 'Winston Churchill and the "Second Front": a Reappraisal', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 62, (3), September 1990, pp.503-537.

³² Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book two, pp.778-779.

³³ J. R. M. Butler, 'Grand Strategy', vol. III, part II, in Butler (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, p. 650 and Michael Howard, 'Grand Strategy', vol. IV in Butler (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, pp. xvii, 34 & 565.

exception to this is Olav Riste's two-volume work: *London regjeringa* (the London Government). The primary aim of this work is to give a 'joint political-historical overview of Norway's place and role in the war alliance' through a history of the Norwegian government-in-exile. By implication this includes a consideration of British interest in Norway within the broader wartime context. Riste describes Norway as strategically located somewhere between the periphery and a dead end, by which he seemingly means that operations this far north would have little military value, especially as the ultimate defeat of Germany was never going to be through Norway. Nevertheless, Riste points to a considerable British interest in this theatre, which he argues up until 1942 was part of a larger strategic effort aimed at initially holding out, followed by a period of consolidation and building up of resources. Raids along the Norwegian seaboard, resistance and sabotage within Norway, were parts of this defensive strategy, which set out to raise British morale but was short-term as circumstances would not allow a long-term offensive strategy with eventual victory as the aim. From 1942, however, with the survival of the Soviet Union and the entry of the USA into the war, Norway's strategic value was shaped by a shared aim, which was the eventual liberation of the whole of Europe. Operations in this theatre were from then on determined by their contribution to the long-term battle plan and their place within the final phase of the war.³⁴

H. P. Willmott, whilst writing on Operation Jupiter, the proposed landing in northern Norway in support of the Soviet Union, also argues that Norway was marginal to the outcome of the war and that an operation against it was in nobody's interest. Like Riste, however, he does concede that it had some importance as a cover for the Normandy landings.³⁵ A recent and detailed narrative of British strategy and policy toward Norway presents a different conclusion, claiming that because of its position in relation to the United Kingdom's maritime supply routes the country was strategically significant. In line with some previous historians it argues that the deployment of the major part of the German surface fleet in Norwegian waters from

³⁴ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 2-3 of the forward and p. 222; vol. II, p. 22.

³⁵ H. P. Willmott, 'Operation Jupiter and Possible Landings in Norway', in P. Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War* (London: HMSO, 1995), pp. 97-108.

1942 represented a threat to these routes and therefore tied down important British naval resources in the Atlantic at the expense of the Mediterranean and Far East.³⁶

The number of publications on SOE is significant, estimated in the 1980s at almost 200 and more recently at over 400 publications on just its operations.³⁷ Prior to the 1990s, however, SOE archives in Britain remained firmly closed to most researchers and therefore a significant proportion of these works consist of the memoirs of ex-SOE employees, rather than scholarly studies, and have famously and aptly been characterised as ‘good thrillers but bad history’. It has also been asserted that SOE activities are often presented in ‘terms more suited to the detective novel than to serious historical analysis’.³⁸ More recently the literature on special operations has been described as ‘deeply unsatisfactory’ and tending to ‘offer adventurous narratives, or anecdotes, of daring deeds, and colourful regimental histories’.³⁹ Nevertheless, there has been an academic debate, which has centred on the contribution, worth and efficiency of SOE within the wider military context.

SOE, like other aspects of World War Two, has its own ‘official histories’. The first, an ‘in-house’ history written soon after the end of the war by the Oxford don William Mackenzie, was commissioned by the organisation. It has only recently been published and is largely a chronicle of SOE between 1940 and 1946, its origins, organisational development, and its activities in several occupied countries including Norway. Nevertheless, it makes some interesting points, arguing that SOE was militarily profitable and that after Dunkirk subversion was perceived as so important that it was unified under one organisation, although this interest soon declined and from as early as the autumn of 1940 the organisation was never again ‘to secure overriding priority’. Mackenzie also asserts that for five years SOE was ‘the main instrument of British action in the internal politics of Europe’.⁴⁰

³⁶ M.C. Mann, *British Policy and Strategy towards Norway 1941-1945*, (University of London thesis, unpublished, 1998), p. 372. See also: G. Till, ‘Naval Power’ in C. McInnes & G.D. Sheffield (eds.), *Warfare in the Twentieth Century: Theory and Practice*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988) p. 96.

³⁷ M. Wheeler, ‘The SOE Phenomenon’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 16, (3), September 1981, p.513, and C. Cunningham, *Beulieu: The Finishing School for Several Agents*, (London: Leo Cooper, 1998), p. 76.

³⁸ Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 453; M. Seaman, ‘Good Thrillers but Bad History’, in K. G. Robertson, (ed.) *War Resistance and Intelligence: Essays in Honour of M.R.D. Foot*, (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 1999), pp. 119-133; David Stafford, ‘Britain Looks at Europe, 1940: Some Origins of SOE’, *Canadian Journal of History*, vol. X, (2), August 1975, p. 231.

³⁹ Gray, *Modern Strategy*, footnote 48, p. 286.

⁴⁰ This history was written between 1945 and 1947, but was not released for publication. It was, however, made available to those historians writing the Service histories of the Second World War and later ‘official’ SOE historians such as Foot and Charles Cruickshank. It eventually became accessible

The first ‘official’ history to be published was Michael Foot’s controversial history of SOE in France, which marked the beginning of his huge body of work on SOE and resistance in occupied Europe. Foot makes a number of important points. The first, perhaps axiomatic point is that it is absurd to claim that SOE could have won the war itself, or even that it had a ‘major battle-winning influence’. Nevertheless, he claims that SOE did help the citizens of the occupied countries regain their self-respect. He also places importance on the cost-effectiveness of SOE, describing it as an ‘exceptionally economic means of attaining strategic ends’, and in comparing it to Bomber Command emphasises what he describes as ‘the possible economies that might be effected by the use of clandestine agents’.⁴¹ This point was pursued by Foot in his response to A. S. Milward’s claim that a resistance strategy was rarely the correct strategy if assessed on economic grounds, as in almost every case the resources could have been better used elsewhere, although he concedes that the social and psychological value of resistance occasionally made it of value. Foot, however, argues that the resistance did make some significant contributions, such as providing intelligence and aiding the escape of aircrew.⁴²

An early and brief consideration of SOE is contained within the British ‘official’ histories of the Second World War. In the series *Grand Strategy* there are several small, scattered references to SOE that collectively claim that the strategic contribution envisaged for this organisation changed as the war progressed. The initial dependence on the employment of patriot armies organised through the efforts of SOE to support eventual British landings ended after the entry of the USA into the war. From this point these forces were no longer central but ‘secondary’ and subordinate to any final strategic plan.⁴³

SOE’s strategic and political contribution was more fully developed in the 1980s with David Stafford’s influential analysis of British and European resistance. He asserts that SOE was born out of Britain’s desperate situation in 1940, and a belief

to researchers in 1996. It was Colin McV. Gubbins, the last Executive Director of SOE, who invited Mackenzie to undertake this work. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, including forward and notes by M. R. D. Foot, pp. 745, 748.

⁴¹ Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 433. Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 358-362; R. White, ‘Teaching the Free Man How to Praise: Michael Foot on SOE and Resistance in Europe’ in Robertson, (ed.), *War Resistance and Intelligence*, pp. 105-117.

⁴² A. S. Milward, ‘The Economic and Strategic Effectiveness of Resistance’ and M. R. D. Foot, ‘What Good did Resistance Do?’ in J. Hawes & R. White, (eds.), *Resistance in Europe 1939-1945*, (London: Allen Lane, 1975), pp. 190 & 206-209.

⁴³ See particularly: Butler, *Grand Strategy*, vol. III, part II, in Butler (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, pp. 517-518.

in a German susceptibility to indirect methods such as economic pressure and subversion. Alongside this, and within the context of Britain's military weakness and isolation, there emerged what Stafford describes as the 'Detonator Concept' the use of underground armies across Europe to explode into action in support of eventual British landings. SOE was therefore initially seen as central to British strategy. But a realisation that supplying these armies would seriously degrade the efforts of Bomber Command and then the entry of the USA into the war eventually relegated the use of resistance movements to a supportive role for major operations such as Overlord and as forces for the maintenance of order after the liberation. Stafford also emphasises the important political impact of SOE, initially as a conservative influence against the Communist movements that wished to pursue more active resistance. As the Allies moved onto the offensive in the later stages of the war, however, SOE activities became a source of conflict between strategic and political post-war interests.⁴⁴

Detail on SOE in Norway can be found across a range of works. The first are SOE's own unpublished internal reports. During the final months of the war and the immediate post-war period SOE produced an account of its activities through the 'war diaries' and the 'sectional histories'. The Scandinavia diaries, which include Norway, are based largely on telegrams sent to and received from agents in the field. They provide a detailed narrative of many of the operations undertaken during the period between July 1942 and February 1944, but were never completed and offer no contextual background or interpretation.⁴⁵ During the summer and early autumn of 1945, SOE's Norwegian section also produced its own internal history. Written by Colonel J. S. Wilson, variously responsible for Norway and Scandinavian, it provides useful background. But although Wilson is not excessively self-congratulatory, often admitting failure or criticising relations with other agencies, especially SIS, the work is again predominately a chronicle of SOE's activities in Norway. These works are significant, however, because they were an important source for early historians, such

⁴⁴ B. P. Farrell uses the term 'Igniter' missions as a substitute for Stafford's 'Detonator' concept suggesting a significant influence from Stafford. See: Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance* and Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 11 & 81.

⁴⁵ Many of the telegrams used in the war diaries no longer exist in the PRO, although many are available in SOE archives in *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* (NHM), the Resistance Museum in Oslo. References to the telegrams are footnoted in the diaries. See: PRO: HS7/279-282, the Scandinavian War Diaries.

as Mackenzie who in the case of Norway rather than plough through the original documents tended to use the in-house summaries.⁴⁶

There has been no specific published British or Norwegian history of SOE in Norway. The closest is Charles Cruickshank's 'official' history of SOE in Scandinavia, which includes Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. It is based almost entirely on the use of British archives and with the exception of a chapter on the development of secret armies, is largely a narrative of some of the organisation's operations in Norway. Reflecting his reliance on British sources the author does not examine the emergence and development of resistance in Norway within the wider context of the occupation. According to Cruickshank, Milorg would have made a 'more effective contribution to the Allied effort' if it had thrown all its resources into sabotage. He also claims that SOE's attempt to build a secret army gave way to Milorg's proposals for an underground force directed from Oslo. The author, however, does make the important point that constant sabotage undermined enemy morale and helped keep large enemy forces in Scandinavia.⁴⁷ There are also a number of sections or paragraphs devoted to Norway within some general SOE histories. These, when footnotes or endnotes are available, appear to rely on either SOE's internal sectional histories or on published memoirs rather than an analysis of contemporaneous documents. They also tend to focus on operations, particularly 'Gunnerside', SOE's attack against the Norsk Hydro heavy water plant at Vemork in southern Norway in February 1943, an event that has attracted considerable historical and cinematic attention.⁴⁸

Two major publications have dominated the arguments on SOE amongst Norwegian historians. Although neither is specifically about special operations they include sections on SOE and provide important interpretations of its activities and

⁴⁶ In the autumn of 1945 two complete copies of the Norwegian section history along with the files of the Stockholm Mission were given to the Norwegian authorities. This history was only made available to historians in the UK from October 1999 although it has been available in SOE archives in Oslo for many years and has been used extensively by Norwegian researchers. See: internal memo from RWE to RW, ref. RWE/1457, 26 November 1945, in HS9/1605/3.

⁴⁷ Cruickshank, *SOE in Scandinavia*, pp. 169, 264, 266.

⁴⁸ Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 296-299; E. H. Cookridge, *Inside SOE: The Story of Special Operations in Western Europe 1940-1945*, (London: A. Baker, 1966), pp. 503-551; Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 648-677. P. F. Dahl, *Heavy Water and the Wartime Race for Nuclear Energy*, (Bristol: IOP Publishing, 1999) and D. Kurzman, *Blood and Water: Sabotaging Hitler's Bomb*, (New York: Henry Holt, 1997) are just two recent publications on the heavy water operations. Whilst completing this thesis yet another television documentary on the sabotage of the heavy water plant at Vemork was broadcast: *The Real Heroes of Telemark*, (BBC Bristol, September/October 2003).

relationship with the Norwegian government-in-exile and Milorg. The first, and the most important of these is *Hjemmestyrkene* (the Home Forces), by Sverre Kjelstadli, which sets out to show the main features of the military resistance in Norway. It was published over forty years ago but never completed and therefore does not cover the final months of Norway's occupation and the country's liberation. Nevertheless, it has influenced several European historians and is still influencing Norwegian historians today. Kjelstadli argues that British scepticism regarding the Norwegian suitability for resistance activities originated in the disastrous campaign of the spring of 1940. This resulted in SOE attempting to carry out subversive activities in Norway, including the building up of an underground army, independent of the Norwegian authorities and Milorg. Contact was made with only those individuals who could be trusted, and they were kept 'largely in the dark'. It was only after the setting up of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee (ANCC) in February 1942 that relations improved, collaboration began, and by 1943 most of the 'childhood ills' had past.⁴⁹

The second work is Olav Riste's *London regjeringa*. Riste argues that initially SOE attempted to control the development of military resistance in Norway and before 1942 did not give proper consideration to Norwegian views. Liability for this, however, also lay with the Norwegian government as it initially had no 'responsible' approach to irregular operations, and therefore SOE was given a free run. He describes SOE's policy as consisting of two strands: short-term action and long-term preparation. Initially these were combined in one organisation under British direction, although at the beginning the priority was action through sabotage in order that SOE as a new organisation could 'justify its existence'. From July 1941, however, Milorg was given the longer-term preparatory role of assembling a secret army whilst SOE teams from the UK or its own local organisation within Norway would undertake sabotage. By autumn 1942, however, confidence in Milorg had

⁴⁹ Owing to Kjelstadli's untimely death in 1961 he never completed volume two. Arnfinn Moland's interpretation of aspects of the relationship between SOE and Milorg can be traced back to Kjelstadli. David Stafford also relies heavily on Kjelstadli's essay in English, from a conference on European resistance movements held in Milan in 1961. See: Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 20, 90-91, 191. A. Moland, 'Milorg and SOE' in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 141-141 and A. Moland, 'Norway', in B. Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*, (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 236-237. See also: Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 40, 83-84. *European Resistance Movements 1939-1945: Proceedings of the Second International Conference on the History of the Resistance Movements held at Milan 26-29 March 1961*, (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1964), pp. 324-339. F. Kersaudy, *Vi stoler på England 1939-1949*, (translated from French by Sidsel Mellbye), (Oslo: Cappelen, 1991), p. 66.

grown, and therefore it was agreed that where possible it would co-ordinate its activities closely with SOE groups. Nevertheless, the functional division remained and the military resistance in Norway continued to concentrate solely on preparing a secret army that could eventually assist operations to liberate the country. It was only from spring 1944 that Milorg became active. Both Riste and Kjelstadli also claim that SOE, particularly in the period from 1940 to 1942 was particularly preoccupied with northern Norway as it was seen as the most promising location for an Allied landing.⁵⁰

The Norwegian political context, the inter-relationship between the Norwegian government in exile, its allies and the Home Front, had an important influence on SOE policy and operations in Norway and therefore also merits some consideration. The pre-eminent work in this field is again Olav Riste's history of the Norwegian government in exile. Riste argues that the Norwegians chose an 'offensive' but pragmatic alliance policy, and thereby had 'considerable influence' in areas such as the main direction of resistance and warfare behind enemy lines. In its relationship with the Home Front, he claims that the government's primary aim was to retain its constitutional authority, and thereby represent the whole nation. Nevertheless, on certain matters it was prepared to compromise in order to maintain a satisfactory relationship with the resistance organisations in Norway.⁵¹

The number of published works on the occupation of Norway and the emergence of resistance is enormous and therefore can only be dealt with in broad terms. In recent years Norwegian historians have conducted a debate, largely in the newspapers, over the nature of these works. Some have claimed that they have been dominated by the so-called 'Skodvin-School' after the historian Magne Skodvin, which has concentrated on the resistance struggle to the detriment of other subjects. Histories of the occupation have also been described as consisting of certain phases of writing, beginning in the 1940s and 1950s with a pioneer generation of historians who were directly linked to the occupation and the government fact finding commissions that were set up at the end of the war. Other historians, however, reject both these descriptions and claim that research in Norway has always continued within a

⁵⁰ Riste, *London regjeringa*. vol. I, pp. 108-121, 154-155, vol. II, pp. 28-28. E. Grannes, 'Operation Jupiter: a Norwegian perspective', in Salmon, (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 109-116.

⁵¹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 381-382.

framework of consensus that emerged during the occupation around the view that opposition to the Nazi state was the right thing to do, and which precluded any generational shifts.⁵² Publications that conform to this ‘consensus’ characterisation are the multi-volume ‘official’ histories of Norway during the occupation,⁵³ which more recently have been described ‘as the basis for the creation of a particular national identity’ and ‘a common understanding of the history of the war’.⁵⁴

In the post-war period Norwegian historians began to produce a number of ‘scholarly theses’. These ‘pioneer’ works laid the foundations for future research on issues such as the emergence of resistance in Norway, and resistance policy.⁵⁵ The first was *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret i Norge* (The Conflict over Occupational Government in Norway) by Magne Skodvin, which analyses the period from 9 April to 25 September 1940. For Skodvin it was the negotiations with the German authorities during the summer of 1940 over the form of Norway’s future government, the ‘*Riksrådforhandlinger*’, and the ‘*Nyordning*’ (‘New Order’) of 25 September, after which all political parties except for *Nasjonal Samling*, the Norwegian Nazi party under Vidkun Quisling (NS), were banned, which created a hardening and togetherness amongst the Norwegian population against the occupation. This was the stimulus that eventually resulted in a unified, national resistance movement centred upon Oslo.⁵⁶

The second work, ‘*Nyordning og motstand*’ (The New Order and Resistance) by Thomas Wyller, explores the period from 25 September 1940 to 25 September 1942. Wyller looks at the various and widespread associations that represented the professional groups in Norway, from farmers through to doctors. He argues that after 25 September 1940 these organisations effectively became the people’s representatives in Norway, and fought a political struggle for democratic values against attempts to impose a one party and single ideology state. This civil resistance

⁵² Article by Øystein Sørensen and Nils Johan Ringdal, in *Aftenposten*, (Oslo), 20 December 1989, cited in Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 346-348. N. J. Ringdal, ‘Historie og moral’, in *Dagbladet*, (Oslo), 11 November, 1987, cited in Øystein Sørensen, ‘Forskningen om krigen i Norge’, *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. I, 1989, p. 44. O. K. Grimnes, ‘Historieskrivingen om okkupasjonen: Det nasjonale konsensus syndromets gjennomslagskraft’, *Nytt Norsk Tidsskrift*, vol. 2, 1990, pp. 108-121.

⁵³ Sverre Steen, *Norges Krig 1940-1945*, vols. I-III, (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1947-1950) and Magne Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig: Fremmedåk og Frihetskamp*, vols. 1–VIII, (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1984-1987).

⁵⁴ It is Stein Ugelvik-Larsen who uses the term ‘official histories’. S. Ugelvik-Larsen, ‘Innledning’ in S. Ugelvik-Larsen (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1999), pp. 13-14.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14 & 22.

⁵⁶ Magne Skodvin, *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret i Norge: fram til 25 september 1940*, (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1956).

struggle, described as the '*Holdningskamp*', was therefore the opposition to NS whose ideology was unwanted by the majority of the population. Wyller also claims that it was these organisations that were the basis of civilian or political resistance in Norway, and to co-ordinate and lead this network of groups a *Koordinasjonskomite*, Co-ordination Committee (KK), was eventually formed in the autumn of 1941. This became an important voice in the leadership of the civilian resistance movement in Norway.⁵⁷

Toward the end of the 1950s Kjelstadli's book, *Hjemmestyrkene*, was also published and showed that Milorg's policy until the final year of the occupation was to 'lie low, go slow'. The objective was gradually and carefully to build an underground army that would be able to contribute to the eventual re-occupation of Norway. Resistance leaders have argued that this was the only viable policy, a view subsequently supported by 'most historians' in the country.⁵⁸

This fascination with the emergence and development of resistance in Norway during the Second World War has continued amongst Norwegian historians and many have been influenced by these early works and built on them.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, from as early as 1945 there has also been a 'counter-current' to the so-called general consensus. This includes what has been described as 'NS-revisionism', which is made up of the views of old NS members and others who are critical of the decisions made against alleged war criminals and traitors in the Norwegian courts after the war. Their argument centres around the claim that a state of war no longer existed in Norway after the capitulation of Norwegian forces on 10 June 1940, an argument firmly rejected by several mainstream historians.⁶⁰ During the 1970s an opposition also emerged to what has been characterised as 'traditional research'. This set out to

⁵⁷ T.Chr. Wyller, *Nyordning og motstand: Organisasjonenes politiske rolle under den tyske okkupasjonen 26.9.1940-25.9.1942*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1958).

⁵⁸ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 97. Moland, 'Norway', in Moore (ed.) *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 243.

⁵⁹ For example Ole Kristian Grimnes describes the Home Front leadership as a political centre in Norway during the occupation and a gathering point for resistance. He argues that although it was a continuation of many political developments from before the war, it also represented a break with pre-war foreign and defence policy represented by neutrality. According to Ivar Kraglund 'Norwegian resistance had fertile soil in 1940' from which it could grow. In other words the events of 1940 were the basis for the emergence of resistance. See: Ole Kristian Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens ledelse*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1979), pp. 9-17. Ivar Kraglund, *Holdningskampen*, (Oslo: NHM, 1993), p. 1.

⁶⁰ Johannes Andenæs and Arnfinn Moland are two leading Norwegian academics who dismiss the claim that a state of war ended in Norway in June 1940. Sørensen, 'Forskningen om krigen i Norge', pp. 48-49. J. Andenæs, *Det vanskelige oppgjøret*, (Oslo: Tano Aschehoug, 3rd ed., 1998), pp. 119-127. Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 22-28.

question some of what have been described as the ‘myths’ of the occupation, such as the togetherness of the people.⁶¹ There are also more recent publications that deal with some of the more difficult and contentious subjects surrounding the occupation, such as the deportation of the Norwegian Jews, which has often been ignored or only touched upon in earlier works, either because archives were closed or because of the sensitivity of the topic. Most of these are not relevant to this thesis, but with one important exception. In 1996 a journalist Egil Ulateig published a book on assassinations in Norway during the occupation, which caused a significant storm at the time, particularly amongst war veterans and some historians. As a consequence of what he considered to be the unreliability of Ulateig’s work, Arnfinn Moland produced his detailed analysis of the assassinations carried out by resistance groups and SOE, a subject that owing to the impact it had on all those involved had been largely avoided by professional historians. He examines this contentious issue within a legal and constitutional context, and argues it was a justified and necessary part of defending the resistance movement in Norway against the constant threat from the German and Norwegian security police.⁶²

This historiography has considered a large number of publications covering a wide range of issues. None of them, however, is a dedicated history of SOE in Norway, which re-emphasises the point that there is a gap in the literature. Moreover, as this thesis is not a straightforward narrative of events but an analysis of SOE actions in this theatre within the wider strategic and political contexts it is important to take account of the wealth of literature, both British and Norwegian and much of it fresh and new, which is particularly relevant to these broad influences.

⁶¹ Hans Fredrik Dahl lists six myths about the occupation including the claim that the whole population came together immediately after 9 April and resisted the occupation. And that the Norwegian people were united against the Germans and Quisling. Dahl argues that it is difficult to talk about resistance at all in 1940, except for separate groups of private individuals, and that the official Norwegian policy was initially to find an accommodation with the Germans. He also points to the 92,000 Norwegians that were investigated after the war for betrayal as evidence that not all the people stood together. Stein Ugelvik-Larsen describes *Krigen i Norge* edited by Dahl as the ‘first revisionist book’. See: H. F. Dahl, ‘Seks myter om okkupasjonen en dokumentasjon ved Hans Fredrik Dahl’, in H. F. Dahl (ed.), *Krigen i Norge*, (Oslo: Pax forlag, 1974), pp. 175-189. Ugelvik-Larsen, ‘Innledning’ in Ugelvik-Larsen, (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, pp. 23-24.

⁶² Arnfinn Moland refers to the ‘notorious unreliability and incorrectness’ of Ulateig’s publication, which set off ‘a storm of protests’ and required a ‘flood of corrections’. The first edition was withdrawn and a second edition printed, which in early 1998 was recalled due to several errors. O. Fure, ‘Norsk okkupasjonshistorie: Konsensus, berøringsangst og tabuisering’, in Ugelvik Larsen (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, p. 34. Moland, *Over grensen?* p. 7. Egil Ulateig, *Med rett til å drepe*, (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1996).

Methodology and Sources

This is an empirical, multi-archival, international history of SOE in Norway. Therefore, although it uses a large collection of secondary literature it is predominately based on the use of primary sources from archives in both Britain and Norway. When researching SOE the historian has once again to confront the problem of the availability and accessibility of contemporary documents. When dealing with a secret organisation, however, and the obsessive concealment that often surrounds it, either through closed archives, 'weeded' files, or a reluctance to record events, the problem is intensified. Consequently, in an attempt to minimise this difficulty this thesis is built on the use of a wide-range of documents from not only SOE but also other files in London and Oslo.

SOE files in Britain were not opened to the general public until 1993. The Scandinavian files were accessible from 1994, which post-dates most of the literature on Norway, and the final batch of SOE documents were only de-classified in 2003. Consequently, there is a lot of new and fresh material now available for historians to work on. It has, however, been estimated that owing to a fire at Baker Street and various culls and weeding, eighty-five percent of SOE files in Britain have been lost, and even those that are now in the Public Records Office in Kew, West London have gaps where papers have been retained or paragraphs, sentences, and names blocked out.⁶³

Fortunately a large archive of SOE material has been preserved at *Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum* (NHM), the Norwegian Resistance Museum, in Oslo. This material, taken back to Norway in 1945 by *Forsvarets Overkommando* (FO), the Norwegian Defence High Command and a result of the close collaboration between SOE and the Norwegian authorities during the war, has been available to researchers for several decades. It fills in some of the gaps within the British archives, particularly detail on operations, and therefore is of immense value.⁶⁴ The NHM

⁶³ There was also a 'SOE Advisor', Duncan Stuart, based at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, who provided this author with important information from SOE's personal files, which although now in the PRO are still largely closed to researchers. In March 2002 there was further release of SOE material, the HS8 Headquarters Files, and in the summer of 2003 the first of the HS9 personal files were opened up to researchers. *SOE Operations in Scandinavia*, (Kew: PRO, 1998), and paper entitled *Release of the Records of the Special Operations Executive: Headquarters Papers HS7*, (Unpublished: PRO, 1999).

⁶⁴ The SOE archive in Oslo contains over forty box files, each holding several A-4 files of papers, which gives some indication of the volume of material. These files have been available to researchers in Norway since the 1950s, but remain largely untouched by British researchers.

archives in Oslo also contain the files of *FO IV*, the department of the Norwegian High Command that worked closely with SOE from December 1942. These files are significant because they not only contain information that is not in SOE archives, but also because they provide an insight, through internal correspondence, to attitudes within the Norwegian military authorities.

Immediately after the war the Norwegian government also set up a series of investigations into issues such as its relations with the Swedish authorities and the Home Front during the occupation, the results of which were eventually published.⁶⁵ The most important of these for this thesis is: *Stortinget og hjemmefronten under krigen: aktstykker utgitt av stortinget*, (The Government and Homefront during the War: Documents published by Parliament), which contains original correspondence between the government in London and the Home Front and therefore is a valuable source of information on the relationship that developed between these parties.⁶⁶

It is also profitable to look beyond SOE material in Britain. The British Chiefs of Staff Committee (COS) memos and minutes in the Cabinet files contain important detail on the strategic direction of the war and the contribution of SOE and Norway. The Foreign Office files include useful information on the interaction between the British and Norwegian governments and the involvement of the British Foreign Office in the development of the relationship between SOE and the Norwegian authorities. The Admiralty and Air Force files are also an additional source of material on SOE, its relationship with these organisations, and on the many operations that SOE contributed to in Norway.

Finally, other secret organisations operated in Norway either with or alongside SOE. The first of these was SIS, which was responsible through using agents working on the ground for gathering military intelligence from the occupied countries of Europe. The files of this secret organisation are still closed in Britain, but fortunately considerable original material on SIS activities in Norway during the Second World War is available in the NHM archives in Oslo, and has been used by

⁶⁵ *Undersøkelseskommisjonens instillinger*, vols. I-II, and vol. III (Appendix), (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1946-1947); *Norges forhold til Sverige*, vols. I-III, (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1947-1949); *Den norske regjeringens virksomhet fra 9 April 1940 til 22 Juni 1945. Departementenes meldinger*, vols. I-IV, (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1948), with vol. IV, *forsvarsdepartementet* (the Ministry of Defence) of specific importance to this work.

⁶⁶ *Regjeringen og hjemmefronten under krigen: aktstykker utgitt av stortinget*, (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1948).

several Norwegian historians.⁶⁷ Their works, and some SIS material that can be found within SOE files, will be used in this thesis to analyse the impact of SIS activity and interests on SOE's policy and operations in Norway. Another clandestine organisation that worked alongside SOE in Norway was OSS, the forerunner of the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). There is a large amount of material on OSS activity and interest in Scandinavia in SOE files at Kew, and some important snippets in the *FO IV* archives in Oslo.

In addition to the wide range of primary source material now available in the British and Norwegian archives, there is also a large collection of memoirs and recollections written by the Norwegians that worked on behalf of SOE. Whilst accepting that many of these accounts may be sensational and exaggerated, they nevertheless help fill in some of the many gaps in the documents and provide an additional source of information on important events or relationships.

Chapter Review

This thesis consists of a series of narratives that examine the various influences behind SOE policy. All are inter-related and lead up to and explain the nature, extent, and mix of SOE operations in this theatre. Consequently, the arrangement of chapters is a reflection of the fact that this work is an examination of SOE's intentions and actions in Norway and not simply a chronicle of events.

There are eight chapters. Chapter one examines the context within which SOE and its Norwegian Section were conceived and how this new organisation changed as the war progressed. It will show that strategic factors were the formative influence behind both the origins of the organisation and its interest in and approach toward Norway. The chapter, by using SOE archives in Britain and Norway, including recently released material, COS papers, and Foreign Office files, will also challenge previous accounts and interpretations on the formation of SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian sections and its military units, such as the Shetlands Base.

Through the appraisal of a series of policy documents the second chapter will move on to examine how SOE's overall plan for Norway developed after 1940. The fundamentals of its policy, the combination of short and long-term objectives,

⁶⁷ B. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1988) and R. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vols. I-III, (Oslo, Cappelen, 1987-1992).

originated from a British strategy that was devised within the difficult conditions of the autumn of 1940. As will be shown through use of SOE files, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) documents, and COS papers it was, however, a policy that changed in response to Norway's contribution to British and later Allied strategy in Europe as it unfolded after 1940.

Using primarily SOE and Foreign Office files (FO), chapters three and four will examine what influence political factors had on SOE's policy for Norway. The close relationship that developed between SOE, Norwegian authorities, and eventually Milorg, something that served the interests of all sides, tempered some aspects of SOE's plans for this theatre, but because it was a largely beneficial association it did not fundamentally alter them.

The fifth and sixth chapter will look at SOE's relations with the other military agencies and regular forces that operated in Norway. From 1940, SOE recognised that it would be required to collaborate on activities such as raids and air attacks. These chapters will show, through using a wide range of primary sources from the PRO, including Admiralty (ADM), Combined Operations (DEFE2), and Royal Air Force (AIR) files, as well as SOE material, that despite difficulties at a higher level SOE worked closely at an organisational and local level with these other parties. Collaboration, therefore, had a productive impact on SOE's plans for Norway, allowing it to widen and intensify its activities.

The realisation of SOE's overall plan for Norway was its operations. The final two chapters, representing the culmination of this work, will through extensive use of SOE archives, particularly those from Norway, show how policy, determined by strategic factors but moulded by political and collaborative influences, translated into activity on the ground. Chapter seven will examine operations in the period from the autumn of 1940 to the spring of 1944, whilst chapter eight will show how SOE activity in the final months of the war closely reflected Norway's position on the strategic and geographical periphery of Europe.

Finally, it has only been possible to include a part of the huge amount of detail on SOE's activities in Norway within the body of this work. The number of operations it was involved in, or attempted to carry out between 1940 and 1945 was enormous. Consequently, attached to this thesis as an addendum consisting of a series of appendices that for the first time using both British and Norwegian archives detail these operations. These will both add to historical knowledge and provide an

important reference point for future historians. There are also appendices on the histories of the Shetlands Base and SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian sections, as well as one that puts names to the many cryptonyms, the series of symbols that SOE employees used in internal correspondence to cover their real identity. SOE produced several organisational charts during its brief existence but as they only provide the researcher with a brief snapshot in time they are quickly out of date and therefore unsatisfactory. The appendix of SOE cryptonyms is a first attempt to track the careers of those staff that who a particular or special responsibility for SOE's policy and operations in Norway, which will again help future researchers.

In July 1940, under the authority of the British War Cabinet, the go ahead was given for the creation of a new organisation called SOE. The first chapter of this thesis will examine the conditions within which it was conceived and how and why it quickly became active in Norway. This is crucial in explaining and understanding its future policy in this theatre.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATION OF SOE AND ITS SCANDINAVIAN SECTION: A NEW STRATEGIC TOOL AND A NORDIC OPPORTUNITY

Introduction

To explain SOE's policy toward Norway it is important to comprehend the origins of this new organisation within the strategic and military background of the summer of 1940, as they are inextricably linked. This chapter will therefore examine the formation and development of SOE, its Scandinavian section, and the military units, such as the Shetlands Base, which were crucial to the implementation of its objectives in this theatre. This is not only to provide important historical knowledge and thereby aid understanding in later chapters, but to demonstrate that they all shared one common factor: all of them were ultimately a result of Britain's military circumstances after the fall of France and the forward strategy that this situation gave rise to.

SOE was created for strategic and military purposes at a time when Britain was weak, isolated and therefore inferior in both position and resources. It was a small but significant element of a strategy that at the time was seen as providing a means by which the nation could move toward the achievement of the ultimate objective of the war, victory over Germany. Because it has been covered so extensively¹ the first section of this chapter will, however, only briefly examine the origins of SOE. Nonetheless, this will show that it was created within a climate and context that fostered both a belief in and a call for a co-ordinated use of clandestine and subversive operations. Moreover its strategic origins were fundamental in the development of its future policy toward the occupied countries.

Norway was also a country where Britain could quickly take the offensive and target Axis power and resources. Factors such as its accessibility across the North Sea, long coastline, peripheral position, the specialist war materials it exported to Germany, and its occupation by substantial enemy forces, made it militarily attractive.

¹ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 1-50. Stafford, 'Britain Looks at Europe, 1940: Some Origins of SOE', pp. 231-247. David Stafford, 'The Detonator Concept: British Strategy, SOE and European Resistance after the fall of France', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 10, (2), April 1975, pp. 185-217. Foot, *SOE in France*, pp. 6-9. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 56-71.

Consequently, SOE quickly formed a Scandinavian section that included Norway, which from the summer of 1940 was responsible for the implementation of its policy and operations in this theatre. From the beginning, as the second part of this chapter will show, it was staffed by personnel who had a background in the implementation of indirect methods, particularly the application of economic pressure and the use of clandestine operations against the enemy. Therefore, they shared the growing belief in and enthusiasm for the potential of subversive operations, something that would have a crucial influence on the development of SOE's plans for Norway.

Lastly, this chapter will examine the formation, nature, and effectiveness of the Norwegian Independent Company No I (henceforward NIC I), the unit of the Royal Norwegian Army formed to undertake special operations on behalf of SOE and the Norwegian authorities, the Shetlands Naval Base, and the RAF 'Special Duty' Air Squadrons that dropped SOE agents and equipment into Norway. All of these military units were crucial to the implementation of clandestine operations and will appear regularly in the body of this thesis, which means it is important to provide some detail on their background. Furthermore, they embody the key elements that shaped SOE plans for this theatre. Firstly, the importance of the strategic background, which although it led to an urgent and co-ordinated effort to create these facilities, also meant that there was a shortage of key resources for operations in Norway, particularly aircraft. Secondly, an early and clear understanding within SOE that it would not be able to operate effectively in Norway without both Norwegian co-operation and support from the regular armed forces, and that therefore these relationships were crucial to its future effectiveness.

I

The Origins of SOE: the Birth of a New Weapon

SOE began its short five and half year life on July 22 1940 when its Charter, which set out its future role, was approved by the War Cabinet.² Two factors were central in the creation of this new organisation that was instructed 'to co-ordinate all action, by

² Neville Chamberlain, who was Lord President and member of the War Cabinet, drew up the Charter. This was 'the last, or almost the last important political action of Mr Chamberlain's career'. On 24 July he had an operation and effectively never worked again. He died the following November. See Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 69, note 4.

way of subversion and sabotage, against the enemy overseas'.³ The first was a small but growing belief within political circles and especially within sections of SIS and War Office of the military value of this type of activity. The second and more important was Britain's military isolation and weakness after the fall of France, which led to the creation of a new forward strategy in the war against Germany.

By July 1940 a commitment to the potential of sabotage, subversion, and guerrilla warfare had taken hold amongst many important political figures in Britain. The most significant of these was Winston Churchill, who when he became Prime Minister in May 1940, as a result of his previous experience as a soldier, journalist, amateur spy and politician, already had a strong faith in the potential of irregular and clandestine warfare. This meant that he placed his considerable weight behind the COS proposal of May 1940 for the creation of a new organisation to co-ordinate sabotage and subversion in the occupied countries, and his support for SOE although not unquestioning was at times critical to its long-term survival.⁴

A belief in the potential of subversive warfare not only resided with the Prime Minister but also more widely. A fear of fifth columnists that developed in the country around the time of the defeat of France in May/June 1940 helped to foster this,⁵ and it led to pressure for Britain to create its own fifth column. An early result of this was the establishment in the of summer 1940 of the so-called 'Auxiliary Units', perhaps better known as 'stay behind units', which would be used to operate behind enemy lines in the event of a German invasion.⁶ In June 1940 a 'Guerrilla Committee' under Commander Stephen King-Hall, MP was also formed. In July it forwarded a memo to Sir Maurice Hankey, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who the Prime Minister had given the task of co-ordinating the re-organisation of subversive warfare. The memo describes winning the war 'by combining a disintegration of the Nazi regime from within and bombing and blockade from without', and points to the use of 'total guerrilla warfare', including raids by military forces, subversive action, and sabotage and propaganda. It was eventually sent to

³ PRO: WP (40) 271, 19 July 1940, in CAB 66/10.

⁴ David Stafford, *Churchill and Secret Service*, (London: Abacus, 1997), pp. 14-16, 21-22, 148-161, 163-165, 219. C. Andrew, 'Churchill and Intelligence', *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 3, (3), July 1988, pp. 181-193.

⁵ PRO: COS (40) 315 (JIC), paper entitled 'Fifth Column Activities in the United Kingdom', report by the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), 2 May 1940, in CAB 80/10. Stafford, *Churchill and Secret Service*, pp. 204-220. Stafford, 'Some origins of SOE', p. 233. Andrew, 'Churchill and Intelligence', p. 185.

⁶ P. Wilkinson & J. Bright Astley, *Gubbins and SOE*, (London: Leo Cooper, 1997), pp. 69-74.

many of the figures who were involved in the discussions with Hankey that led to the formation of SOE and is an indication of the considerable support that existed within the British political and military establishment for the use of irregular and subversive measures in the war against Germany.⁷ Furthermore, there was a belief, which had emerged before the outbreak of war, in Nazi economic and political vulnerability.⁸ These factors, a mixture of fears, preconceptions about German susceptibility, and growing interest in the potential of subversive warfare, all of which were nourished by Britain's increasingly desperate military situation in spring 1940, created the fertile conditions that led to the germination of SOE.

Alongside this, two small departments were actively investigating the potential of subversive and clandestine warfare. The history of the creation of Military Intelligence (Research), (MI [R]), a small section within the War Office under Lieutenant Colonel J. F. C. Holland that analysed the use of special or irregular forces, and Section D, a new section established within SIS under Major Lawrence Grand to examine attacking the enemy by means other than operations by military forces, has been well documented elsewhere and therefore will not be repeated here.⁹ Nevertheless, these developments were important as they indicate that even before the creation of SOE significant consideration had already been given within the military establishment to both the potential of clandestine warfare and importantly the employment of fifth column or resistance groups within occupied Europe. Many of the personnel that were later employed by SOE came from within Section D and MI (R), and they provided not only the organisational but also more significantly the conceptual foundations upon which SOE was built. These departments were active before and after the outbreak of war in 1939 and were importantly 'seen as playing a part' within economic warfare.¹⁰ They also took an early strategic and military interest in Norway. Section D was active in Scandinavia from as early as the summer

⁷ The memo was sent to Sir Maurice Hankey on 4 July 1940. On 9 July Hankey advised Stephen King-Hall that he had sent the paper to the 'leading hands in the organisation which is developing', by which he meant SOE. The paper was sent to Sir Stewart Menzies, head of SIS, General Bourne, head of Combined Operations, discussed with Lawrence Grand, head of Section D, and a copy probably reached Hugh Dalton, who a week later was given responsible for SOE. See PRO: paper entitled 'Guerrilla Warfare' attached to a letter to Sir Maurice Hankey, 4 July 1940, in CAB 63/92. Stafford, 'Some Origins of SOE', p. 235.

⁸ Stafford, 'Some Origins of SOE', p. 239.

⁹ Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 4-11, 38-55. Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 1-16.

¹⁰ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 23.

of 1938,¹¹ and many of the recruits and ideas that SOE would use in Norway were taken from these two organisations.

Although there was a developing interest in irregular and subversive activities and a few small operations were undertaken within occupied Europe prior to spring 1940, they were largely uncoordinated and sporadic. With the rapid collapse of France in May and June, however, the context changed. Prior to this British strategy envisaged a three-staged process: warding off an attempted German knockout blow, followed by consolidation and a building of resources whilst German strength was undermined by economic pressure and propaganda and a final general offensive. It was a strategy based on a belief that ‘the French army could hold out and the German economy was vulnerable’.¹² Rapid German success in France in May 1940, however, required the COS to re-assess Britain’s position, and on 19 May 1940 they met to consider a paper entitled ‘British Strategy in a Certain Eventuality’, the certain eventuality being the new conditions resulting from the collapse of France and the loss of a substantial part of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and its equipment. This document both marked a shift in strategy and led directly to the formation of SOE. It re-affirmed the British emphasis on economic pressure and air attack, but more importantly placed them at the fulcrum of future strategy. An additional strand was, however, also added to the strategic mix, ‘the stimulation of the seeds of revolt within the conquered territories’. The potential of widespread resistance to German occupation across Europe was seen as a valuable additional weapon, which could be used after conditions in these countries had begun to deteriorate due to economic pressure. As this activity was considered of the highest importance it was decided that a ‘special organisation’ was required. On 27 May 1940 the War Cabinet accepted the recommendations of this paper and instigated the process that led to the War Cabinet’s approval of SOE’s Charter on 22 July 1940.¹³ It was therefore Britain’s military situation in the summer of 1940 and the search for a new way forward in the

¹¹ H.H. Hartley was commissioned by Section D in August 1938 to survey Narvik harbour. He carried out the task and apparently brought back a ‘full report’. PRO: hand-written account of Section D by Lawrence Grande in HS7/5. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 17, footnote no. 2.

¹² COS minutes, 21 January 1937, in WO193/685, and COS 843, 20 February 1939 in CAB16/183A, cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 50. DP (P) 44, February 1939, cited in Howard, *The Continental Commitment*, p. 135. T. Imlay, ‘Allied Economic Intelligence and Strategy during the “Phoney War”’, *Intelligence and National Security*, vol.13, (4), October, 1988, p. 107.

¹³ PRO: WP (40) 168, in CAB 66/7, and discussed at WM (40) 141, 27 May 1940, in CAB 65/7. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, pp. 47-48.

war against Germany that ultimately led to the birth of this new organisation. SOE had strategic origins and its link to wider strategic developments would be a crucial factor in its future development and military contribution.

The political activity and the negotiations leading up to the formation of SOE in July 1940 have also been fully narrated elsewhere and therefore will not be repeated here.¹⁴ Since June 1939 it had been recognised that there was a need to harmonise 'paramilitary' activities, but after the collapse of France sabotage and subversion were considered 'of such importance' it was decided that they had to be unified 'under one strong hand'.¹⁵ Consequently, on 16 July 1940, Hugh Dalton, the Minister of Economic Warfare, was invited by the Prime Minister to take charge of SOE. The new organisation therefore had its own minister and subversive activities were removed from their previous Foreign and War Office control. SOE was also, rather appropriately, placed under the minister whose remit included economic warfare against the enemy.¹⁶ Dalton's grandiose view of what SOE could achieve, a Europe in a state of 'permanent revolution', and his call for subversion to be an independent service, a 'Fourth Arm', were, however, ultimately rejected.¹⁷ Therefore, although SOE represented a new element of Britain's forward strategy, it was very much a junior player.

The creation of a Charter was an attempt to define SOE's function and its relationship with other organisations and government departments, such as SIS, MI5, the Foreign Office and the COS. And although the Charter is vague in how these relationships would work, it does establish some important points of principle. Co-operation with the intelligence services and consultation with the Foreign Office are emphasised, as is the conviction 'that the general plan for irregular warfare offensive

¹⁴ Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 56-71. Foot, *SOE in France*, pp. 1-11. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 24-27.

¹⁵ For example, in May 1940 the Inter-Services Project Board (ISPB) was set up to co-ordinate projects for attacking the enemy by sabotage or other irregular activities and met eight times during May 1940, but disappeared on the setting up of SOE in July 1940. See: PRO: COS (40) 305 (JIC), JIC (40) 36, 26 April 1940, in CAB 80/10. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 56-60, 748. Stafford, 'Some Origins of SOE' p. 233.

¹⁶ Dalton, as a Labour minister, was given control of SOE to maintain the political balance between the parties within the coalition government. It was also considered appropriate that a Labour minister should be in charge of a subversive organisation. SOE had to continue to 'consult' with the Foreign Office and other departments, and its relationship with the Foreign Office was often problematic. See: H. Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, (London: Frederick Muller, 1957), p. 366. W. Medlicott, *The Economic Blockade*, vol. I, (London: HMSO, 1952), pp. 13-16. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 11, 26, 39. C. J. M. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive: Royal Air Force Coastal Command's Anti Shipping Campaign 1940-1945*, (London: Frank Cass, 1995), pp. 95-116.

¹⁷ Dalton, *The Fateful Years*, p. 367. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 29-30.

operations should be in step with the general strategical conduct of the war'.¹⁸ Consequently over the next four years SOE was guided by a series of directives that were approved by the COS. These set out in detail how subversive operations in the occupied countries of Europe including Norway would contribute to or support military operations. They also specified priorities and the role of SOE in the various theatres of war.¹⁹ Significantly, therefore, SOE not only had strategic origins, its future role was also inextricably and formally linked to strategic and operational requirements.

Consequently, in the autumn of 1943, by which time the planning and preparation of Operation Overlord had become the Allies' strategic priority in the west, responsibility for SOE in Norway was placed under the operational command of the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander Designate (COSSAC).²⁰ In line with this SOE's London office was merged with the offices of its American counterpart, the Special Operations (SO) branch of OSS to form SOE/SO HQ. In January 1944, command of Allied operations in northwest Europe and Scandinavia was placed under the control of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), and in May SOE/SO HQ was renamed Special Forces HQ (SFHQ).²¹ Therefore, from early 1944 through to the end of the war it was directives issued by SHAEF that determined SOE's policy in Norway.

The organisational re-alignment of special operations began during the summer and autumn of 1940 when Section D and MI (R) were merged into SOE. This new organisation, which moved into its wartime residence in Baker Street in London at this time, was initially divided into three departments: SO1, which took over covert propaganda, SO2, which subsumed Section D and was responsible for operations, and SO3, which was responsible for intelligence and planning. In August

¹⁸ PRO: WP (40) 271, 19 July 1940, in CAB 66/10.

¹⁹ Four SOE directives were issued by the British COS between November 1940 and November 1944 and all are available in the PRO. COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940 in CAB 80/56. COS (42) 133 (0), 'SOE Collaboration in Operations on the Continent', 12 May 1942, in CAB 80/62. COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Executive Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68. COS (44) 957 (0), 'Directive to Special Operations Executive', 9 November 1944, in CAB 80/89.

²⁰ PRO: COSSAC (43) 58 (final), from F. E. Morgan to Secretary, COS Committee, 2 October 1943, in WO 219/40B. This states that at the COS meeting, COS (43) 217th (0), on 16 September 1943 COSSAC would discuss with SOE proposals for the control of SOE activities in northwest Europe. See also: SHAEF/17240/13/Ops (A), 23 March 1943, 'Operational Directive to SFHQ,' in WO219/4967, which states that at the COS meeting, COS (43) 237th meeting (0) on 15 October 1943, SOE activities were finally placed under COSSAC.

²¹ Stafford, *British and European resistance*, p. 153.

1941, however, after a year of inter-departmental wrangles, SO1 was abolished and its responsibilities taken over by the Political Warfare Executive (PWE). SO3 had already been wound up leaving only SO2, which took on the title of the Special Operations Executive.²² From this point the organisation grew significantly in size and employed a total of almost 12,000 personnel by the spring of 1944,²³ which reflected the increasing range and scale of its activities across occupied Europe. The organisation remained responsible to the Minister for Economic Warfare, which from February 1942 was the Tory minister Lord Selborne. It was, however, its Executive Director (CD) that provided the 'leadership and strategic control'²⁴ of what was a hierarchical organisation. The CD initially kept in touch with his senior officers through a series of senior committees, beginning with the 'D-Board' in August 1940, which became the 'SO2 Executive Committee' in December, was renamed the 'Board of Directors' in November 1941, and finally became SOE Council in February 1942. The Council was the executive body that 'prepared most of SOE's main policies and had a perceptible influence on resistance strategy'.²⁵ Under the Council came the country sections, often in regional groupings such as Scandinavia and which contained the staff officers responsible for operations in the occupied countries, followed by the technical departments such as finance, signals and operations.

This section has shown that SOE originated as a new strategic tool within a climate receptive to the use of subversive operations. It was born at a time when sabotage, subversion, and the encouragement of the 'seeds' of resistance were seen as some of the few offensive military measures that Britain could use in the war against Germany. Furthermore, occupied Norway was identified as a country where Britain could quickly employ clandestine operations, and where nascent resistance groups were beginning to develop.

²² Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 75-84.

²³ In July 1942, the total SOE staff was 3,226. By May 1944, the figure was just under 12,000. Altogether 5,766 men and women were trained as organisers and instructors in the 41 training schools that were established during the war. At its peak SOE had 500 clandestine wireless stations operating in Europe and the RAF flew over 15,000 sorties from the UK to France and the Mediterranean on behalf of SOE. See: PRO: 'Personnel Employed by SOE', and 'Comparison of Total RAF Bomber Command Sorties from UK with those carried out for SOE', in HS7/1. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 717-719.

²⁴ Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 16.

²⁵ Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 83. M. R. D. Foot, *Resistance: an Analysis of European Resistance to Nazism 1940-1945*, (London: Eyre Methuen, 1976), p. 139.

II

SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian Sections: The Continuation of a Strategic and Military Tradition in Norway

It was the occupied countries that proved to be fruitful for SOE. After the withdrawal of Allied troops and the capitulation of Norwegian forces in June 1940, German control over Norway was confirmed and therefore the country became a potential sphere of operations for a range of clandestine and underground activities. It was also decided that it was 'essential' that SOE was formed on a 'territorial' basis and as a result country and regional sections were created, including a Scandinavian section,²⁶ which contained the staff that would be responsible for administering and implementing SOE activity in this theatre. It has been asserted that the attitude of the staff within this section, particularly toward the Norwegian authorities, was shaped by British experiences during the disastrous campaign in Norway in the spring of 1940.²⁷ The Scandinavian section, however, included personnel with a range of backgrounds often from much earlier. From the outbreak of the war in Europe, key figures in the eventual development and discharge of SOE policy in this theatre had contributed to efforts to implement economic pressure against Germany through Norway. Many of the Scandinavian section's staff also had experience of working within those organisations, Section D and MI (R), which were merged into SOE. They therefore brought with them many of the ideas and practices that these organisations had either conceived or advocated, such as the potential of sabotage and guerrilla warfare. Some of the staff also had direct involvement in irregular and subversive activities in Norway, both before, during and after the campaign of 1940, and therefore had developed an enthusiasm for the military potential of such actions.

A detailed chronicle of the history of the SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian sections can be found and referred to in Appendix B.²⁸ This shows that for most of the war Norway, along with Sweden and Denmark, had its own sub-section under the umbrella of a Scandinavian section, although for periods, such as in 1942, it was given its own independence. Two figures were central in the early formulation of policy toward Norway and the setting up of the Scandinavian section. Both moved

²⁶ PRO: paper by H. T. N. Gaitskell, 31 July 1940 in HS8/271.

²⁷ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 56 & 89.

²⁸ See Appendix B, 'A History of Section D and SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian Sections in London and Stockholm', pp. 315-318.

onto senior positions within SOE, but continued to have a major influence over its activities in Norway and its relations with the Norwegian authorities. These were Sir Charles Hambro and Harry Sporborg.

Charles Hambro had been head of the Scandinavian section in the Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW), but in August 1940, after a recommendation from Hugh Gaitskell, he was recruited by Hugh Dalton to set up and run SOE's Scandinavian section.²⁹ He occupied this position until December 1940 when he took over responsibility for Europe, parts of Africa, and propaganda in SO2 and began his rapid rise to CD in 1942.³⁰ Harry Sporborg, who was Hambro's deputy at the MEW, also joined SOE and continued to work under Hambro with responsibility for Norway until December 1940 when he took over the Scandinavian section, a position he retained until October 1941, when George Wiskeman replaced him. He nevertheless maintained a close involvement with Norway through 1942 despite his continued rise within SOE, eventually becoming its Vice-Chief in September 1943.³¹

Hambro had family connections with Norway,³² which would have helped him to understand the nature of the country and its political institutions. Prior to joining SOE he had also, along with Sporborg, made contact with members of the Norwegian government,³³ something that would help in the development of fruitful relations between SOE and the Norwegian authorities. Moreover, the MEW was created in 1939 'to advise the armed services on the measures that they should adopt in order to undermine the enemy's economy'.³⁴ Both Hambro and Sporborg's early war experience, therefore, came from their contribution to the application of economic pressure against Germany through attempting to deny it supplies of important materials from Scandinavia, particularly Norway. Between September 1939 and

²⁹ Hugh Gaitskell was Dalton's private secretary at the MEW. PRO: paper by G. T. N. Gaitskell, 31 July 1940, in HS8/271. Memo from CD (Sir Frank Nelson) to Gladwyn Jebb, ref. CD/OR/180, 5 November 1940 in HS8/334. 'Attachment A', biographical details on Charles Hambro supplied by SOE Adviser, 25 July 2001. B. Brivati, *Hugh Gaitskell*, (London: Richard Cohen Books, 1996), pp. 43-62.

³⁰ For career details see: Appendix A, 'List of SOE Staff Cryptonyms for Scandinavia and Norway', pp. 302-314.

³¹ Ibid.

³² His relative was C. J. Hambro, President of the Norwegian Parliament. See: B. Bramsen & K. Wain, *The Hambros 1779-1979*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1979). H.F. Dahl, [et al], *Norsk Krigsleksikon 1940-1945*, p. 155.

³³ Whilst working for the MEW, both Sporborg and Hambro made contact with Trygve Lie, the future Norwegian Foreign Minister, and requested that Britain be permitted to make use of the Norwegian ships in the USA and in Swedish harbours. See: T. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen 1940-1942*, (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1955), p. 61.

³⁴ FO 837/24, as cited in Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 116.

March 1941, Hambro was involved in negotiations with the Norwegian government on a War-Trade agreement, which set out to reduce the export to Germany of certain Norwegian products such as fish, fish products, non-ferrous metals, and ferro-alloys. During a visit to Norway in February 1940 he also had discussions with directors of the Orkla Mining Company at Løkken south of Trondheim on how their exports of pyrite ore, an important source of sulphur and copper for the German munitions industry, could be reduced. This site was eventually attacked at least on four occasions by SOE teams between 1942 and 1944, more than any other industrial target in Norway.³⁵ Both Hambro's and Sporborg's background of working within the MEW was therefore an important influence on the future development of SOE's plans for Norway. For example in August 1940, soon after his move to SOE Hambro began to examine ways of interrupting supplies of fish oil to Germany, something the Scandinavian section continued to pursue until the end of 1941.³⁶ Sporborg also advised Section D on an operation called the 'Norwegian Expedition', which it carried out in June 1940 against targets in the Bergen area, including the power plant for a A/S Bjølvefossen at Åvik in Hardanger, which produced ferro-chromium.³⁷ The production of specialist metals and mining of ores became the most important targets for SOE in Norway over the following years.³⁸ Strategic interest in Norway as a source of materials for the German war economy began well before SOE was formed, but significantly through the influence of Hambro and Sporborg it was continued. The many *coup de main* operations that were carried out by SOE against industrial and economic targets in Norway after 1940 were therefore, through using military

³⁵ PRO: 'Diary of Scandinavian Tour', summer 1945, by J.S. Wilson, in HS9/ 1402/6. Medlicott, *The Economic Blockade*, vol. I, pp. 152-161. Statement of Thorry Kiær, director of the Orkla Mining Co., 18 July 1945, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 354. See also: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway: 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

³⁶ During August 1940 several memos were exchanged between D/G Mouse (Lt. J.L. Chaworth-Musters) and CD (Sir Frank Nelson) on the Norwegian herring oil industry and the possibility of interfering with supplies to Germany. Hambro was behind these proposals and on 30 August presented a paper to the 'Board of Directors of D- Section' on possible attacks against the Norwegian herring oil industry. On 10 September the Board of Directors decided not to proceed without the tacit consent of the Norwegian authorities. See: PRO: 'Minutes of the First and Second Meetings of the Board of Directors, 30 August and 10 September 1940' in HS8/194. Memo from CD, (Sir Frank Nelson) to D, (Lawrence Grand), (undated but sometime in August 1940), and memo from D/G Mouse (Lt. J.L. Chaworth-Musters) to CD (Sir Frank Nelson) (undated but sometime in August 1940) in HS2/238.

³⁷ This was a joint Section D/MI (R) operation that targeted communications, factories, such as Høyanger aluminium smelting works, and power houses, such as at Ålvik, which were situated in the Voss, Sognefjord and Hardangerfjord region of western Norway. For details see: PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Expedition', (undated but probably early May 1940) in HS2/ 241, and 'Log of V.2.S – Aberdeen to Norway and Return', 17 June 1940, in HS2/242.

³⁸ See Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

means, a perpetuation and attempted expansion of the policy of applying pressure against Germany that had begun in the autumn of 1939 with the work of the MEW.

SOE's small Norwegian section, which was formed during the summer and early autumn of 1940, also included personnel that had previous experience of subversive or irregular activities in Norway. It was British strategic interest in the export of Swedish iron-ore through Narvik to Germany that led to Section D's involvement in Norway from the summer of 1938.³⁹ In 1939 it also established a Scandinavian section, followed later in the year by a small Norwegian sub-section staffed by J. L. Chaworth-Musters. Musters, who had personal experience of Norway, worked under the cover of temporary vice-consul in Bergen between January and May 1940, before escaping to Britain to work with the Norwegians recruited by Section D for the 'Norwegian Expedition'.⁴⁰ When Musters moved to SOE in the summer of 1940 to help set-up its Norwegian section he therefore brought with him this experience as well as an understanding of the country, especially its language. This background made him ideally suited for the recruitment and preparation of Norwegian volunteers, and whilst carrying out this role he had an important influence on the development of early relations with the Norwegian authorities in London.

After Sporborg took over responsibility for the Scandinavian section, the Norwegian sub-section was, from January 1941, placed under Lt. Commander Frank Stagg RN, who had been Sporborg's principal adviser. Stagg had worked for SIS and also had considerable experience of Scandinavia and its languages. It was, however, his naval experience and particular interest in northern Norway,⁴¹ combined with Sporborg's background in economic warfare, that appears to have been another important contributory factor in the development of SOE's early plans for this theatre. In December 1940, Stagg produced a series of proposals that recommended operations in the north of the country in order to interrupt the supplies of war materials to Germany.⁴² This led to his instigation of or direct involvement in the

³⁹ PRO: hand-written account of Section D by Lawrence Grande in HS7/5.

⁴⁰ Ibid. A. Haga, *Skygger over Utvær*, (Oslo: J. W. Cappelens Forlaget, 2001), pp. 15-27.

⁴¹ Stagg worked for SIS and was Naval Consul in Trondheim in 1939. Letter from 'The SOE Adviser', 29 November 2000, including information from the personal file of Frank Stagg. See also: A. Judd, *The Quest for C*, (London: Harper-Collins, 1999), p. 326.

⁴² NHM: 'Paralysing of Ship Movement on Norway's West Coast', 14 December 1940, from S.1 (F. Stagg) to SZ (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg). 'Proposals for Raids on Northern Norway from Iceland', 17 December 1940, from S.1 (F. Stagg) to SZ (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg), both in SOE archive, boks 1, mappe 10/3.

planning of the series of amphibious operations that were undertaken against targets along the Norwegian seaboard during 1941.⁴³

Lastly, MI (R) had a direct involvement in Norway during the British campaign in the spring of 1940 through special units such as the 'Independent Companies' and the 'No. 13 Military Mission', which attempted harassing operations against the enemy's flanks and lines of communication in support of regular forces.⁴⁴ Its ideas and experience were exported to SOE when it was subsumed into the organisation at the end of October 1940. MI (R) influence percolated through to the Norwegian section primarily through Brigadier, later Major General, Colin McVean (McV.) Gubbins who joined the organisation in November 1940 and was made responsible for the supervision of training and the conduct of operations and raiding parties.⁴⁵ Gubbins had undertaken extensive research into guerrilla warfare behind enemy lines, had personal experience of Norway and rose quickly within SOE becoming its Executive Director in September 1943. He eventually had an important and direct influence over SOE's policy and activities in this theatre both whilst in charge of operations in the occupied countries and later as Deputy Executive Director with responsibility for Western Europe and higher 'operational policy'.⁴⁶

Gubbins had also been a mentor to John Skinner Wilson, who in January 1942 became head of an independent Norwegian section and in September 1943 Regional Head of the Directorate of Scandinavian and Baltic States. Prior to joining the Norwegian section, Wilson had been an instructor in counter-espionage, anti-fifth column and offensive fifth column work, and had worked closely with Gubbins in the Training Section of SOE. His background was also steeped in the concept and potential of using irregular operations behind enemy lines.⁴⁷

⁴³ For details see: Appendix E, 'Sea-borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE, along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

⁴⁴ PRO: Report of No. 13 Military Mission to Norway' in HS8/261. Wilkinson & Bright Astley, *Gubbins & SOE*, pp. 50-68.

⁴⁵ According to M. R. D. Foot, MI (R) doctrines 'formed the core of SOE training', whilst David Stafford describes Colin Gubbins as exercising 'strong influence on SOE organisation and doctrine'. See: Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 8-11. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 31.

⁴⁶ Gubbins commanded the 'Independent Companies' in Norway during the spring campaign. For details of his SOE career see: Appendix A, 'List of SOE Staff Cryptonyms for Scandinavia and Norway', pp. 302-314. Wilkinson & Astley, *Gubbins & SOE*, pp. 50-68.

⁴⁷ In July 1940, Wilson joined MI (R) before transferring to the Training Section of SOE in December 1940. In May 1941 he became Lt. Col. and Staff Officer to the Director of Training (Gubbins) with responsibility for supervising training. See: PRO: personal file of John Skinner Wilson, in HS9/1605/3.

The senior staff of SOE and its Scandinavian section, who were responsible for developing policy and implementing operations in this theatre, contained several key individuals who had a background in the development and use of clandestine or indirect forms of warfare, particularly with regard to Norway. They were ideally suited for implementing this element of Britain's forward strategy and enthusiastic exponents of the military opportunities that this occupied country appeared to offer. As with SOE there is, therefore, an explicit link between the creation of its Scandinavian section and the strategic potential that special operations appeared to offer in the situation that Britain found itself in the summer of 1940.

The long frontier that separated Norway and neutral Sweden also made Stockholm an important location for the implementation of SOE operations in this theatre. For example it was a major route for refugees, and SOE and SIS agents who wished to move between the two countries. SOE involvement in Norway from its Stockholm Mission at the British Legation began with Malcolm Munthe. Munthe was another MI (R) officer who had been active in Scandinavia and Norway from December 1939, often working from the Legation. In April 1940 he was in Norway preparing to act as a liaison officer with the Norwegian army and to receive the British forces that were expected to land in response to a German invasion. Munthe's escape to Stockholm during the German occupation, his employment as Assistant Military Attaché (AMA) at the Legation, his recruitment to SOE by Charles Hambro, and his setting up of the 'Red Horse' organisation to subsequently cover his courier operations, re-establishment of contacts, and instigation of sabotage in Norway on behalf of SOE in 1940 and 1941 has been well documented.⁴⁸ What is most significant is that Munthe is another example of the MI (R) influence that filtered into SOE from the autumn of 1940.⁴⁹ His enthusiasm should be seen within the context of

⁴⁸ Munthe's first trip to Stockholm was in December 1939, followed by a further trip at the end of February 1940. Munthe was involved with Andrew Croft in moving military stores across Norway to Finland. At the end of March 1940, after arriving back in Stockholm, he was ordered to Oslo and then to Stavanger. In expectation of a German invasion four MI (R) men were established as 'Assistant Consuls' in Narvik (Captain Torrance), Trondheim (Major Palmer), Bergen (Captain Andrew Croft) and Stavanger (Captain Malcolm Munthe). Munthe, Torrance, and Croft all went on to work for the SOE. For details see: PRO: 'War Diary and Intelligence Summary – MIR War office Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. J. C. F. Holland DFC RE', in HS8/263. A. Croft, *A Talent for Adventure*, (London: Hanley Swan, 1991), pp. 140-144. M. Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, (London: Duckworth, 1954).

⁴⁹ The Swedish authorities were informed of Munthe's appointment as AMA on 9 June 1940 and he finally left Sweden on 19 July 1941. PRO: hand written record by J. M. Addis of a meeting with C. Hambro, 4 February 1941, ref. N510/G, in FO371/29408; Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, pp. 53-114; C. G. McKay, *From Information to Intrigue: Studies in Secret Service based on the Swedish Experience 1939-1945*, (London: Frank Cass, 1993), p. 76.

his military background, which was that he belonged to an organisation whose *raison d'être* was to develop methods to harass the enemy. He was also part of the small effort that began in autumn 1940 to use clandestine and subversive operations against the enemy in order to ensure that its occupation of Norway quickly became an increasing military burden. His sponsoring of subversive activity, however, soon brought him to the attention of the Norwegian Legation in Stockholm and the Swedish government, which was keen to avoid any threat to its neutrality through the displeasure that Munthe's actions might cause Germany. The Swedish authorities originally called for his expulsion in January 1941,⁵⁰ but were persuaded to back down by the British Minister in Stockholm, Sir Victor Mallet. Recently released material appears to indicate that Munthe's activities had the support of not only SOE, but also initially and more surprisingly, the British Foreign Office. At a time when the fear of a German invasion of Britain from Europe, including Norway, was still prevalent, Munthe's contact with groups in the country that could be organised to operate behind German lines, was considered valuable. His relationship with Mallet, however, who grew to object to SOE using the Legation, undermined efforts to keep him in place and in the late spring of 1941 after the Swedish authorities again objected to his presence, SOE was forced to recall him to London.⁵¹ This was therefore an early example of how SOE had to balance its eagerness to become active in Norway with the local relationships that were ultimately crucial to its effectiveness.

Second Lieutenant Hugh Marks, who had fought in the Norwegian campaign before escaping to Stockholm, initially continued Munthe's work. His earlier association with Munthe's activities, however, also incurred the displeasure of both Victor Mallet and the Swedish government and he returned to Britain in early October 1941. The role of AMA was taken over by Andrew Croft; a former colleague of Munthe's in MI (R), who had also been in Norway when it was occupied. Whilst Croft undertook more general work for SOE it was Edgar Nielsen who assumed responsibility for Norway at the British Legation, a role in which he continued until the end of the war. Nielsen, with Danish ancestry, had a diplomatic and an intelligence background in Norway and was working as assistant vice-consul at Skien

⁵⁰ See: C.G. McKay, *From Information to Intrigue*, pp. 76-78.

⁵¹ PRO: hand written record by J. M. Addis of a meeting with C. Hambro, 4 February 1941, ref. N510/G, letter from Victor Mallet to Henry Hopkinson in the British Foreign Office dated 5 February 1941, ref. N1250/G, note by J. Addis, 5 March 1941, ref. N 1250/G, all in FO371/29408.

when the country was occupied. He was put forward by the Foreign Office and accepted by SOE as he was 'on the spot' and it meant agreement could then be reached over Marks' replacement. He was not, therefore, SOE's immediate choice and unlike many of his colleagues in London he did not have a background and therefore a particular understanding of the nature and requirements of special operations, which may have contributed to his difficult relationship with SOE's HQ in London.⁵²

The early creation of SOE's Scandinavian section under men such as Hambro reflected the commitment to the co-ordination and intensification of subversive operations in this theatre that emerged in the strategic conditions of the summer of 1940. SOE's interest in Norway and enthusiastic pursuit of clandestine activities was therefore directly linked to the dire military situation that Britain found itself in at this time, and the search for ways to take the offensive against Germany. The whole process was furthered by the employment of staff who had a background in organisations such as the MEW, Section D, and MI (R), and who had direct military experience of Norway through earlier involvement in special operations, coupled with a knowledge of the country and its language. This alone was, however, not enough.

III

SOE Military Units for Norway: From the Shetlands to Aviemore

For SOE to be able to implement its plans it required both suitable recruits to undertake operations on its behalf in the difficult conditions of occupied Norway and the transportation to get them there. Having a policy and a series of military aims and objectives would be fruitless without the means to achieve them, and in the autumn of 1940 SOE was a new organisation with very few resources. Consequently, it began urgent attempts to recruit Norwegian volunteers. SOE also took part in a collaborative project to establish a small naval base on the Shetland Islands from where a handful of Norwegian fishing vessels and crew would eventually be used to

⁵² For details on the careers of Marks and Nielsen see: Appendix A, 'List of SOE Cryptonyms for Scandinavia and Norway', pp. 302-314. PRO: draft letter to Mr Victor Mallet in Stockholm from Charles Hambro, ref. N5464/G, 15 September 1941; letter from H.N. Sporborg to Peter Loxley, Foreign Office, ref. N5674/G, 27 September 1941; draft note for a meeting with Sir Charles Hambro, 15 October 1941, ref. N6381/G, all in FO371/29697. Letter from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen), ref. N. 16, 23 January 1944, in HS2/128.

provide an important link with Norway. With a severe limitation on the availability of aircraft for Special Duty operations, particularly for Norway, which did not receive its first airdrop until early 1942, the North Sea route was critical.

An understanding of the formation and development of the unit of the Royal Norwegian army, NIC (I), which carried out operations in Norway on behalf of SOE and the Norwegian High Command, the Shetlands Base, and the Special Duty flights that dropped SOE teams and supplies into Norway is important because of what they represented. The origins of NIC (I) and the Shetlands Base were the result of a resolve in the summer of 1940 to intensify and accelerate the implementation of clandestine and subversive operations in this theatre. Both were built on the experiences of SOE's predecessor organisations, Section D and MI (R). They also, however, reflect the joint nature of SOE activity in Norway, the collaboration that developed with both the Norwegian authorities and the other Allied agencies that took a similar military interest in this country.

SOE operations required Norwegian recruits because they had the language skills and experience of local conditions that enabled them to work successfully in occupied Norway. Therefore, from the summer of 1940, building on a practice instigated by Section D, SOE began attempts to enlist and train Norwegians to undertake actions on its behalf. It started as an improvised small-scale effort, but during the summer and early autumn of 1940, under the auspices of the Scandinavian section, attempts were made through liaison with leading figures within the Norwegian government and military authorities, to formalise and accelerate the process. There was an early realisation that this process could not happen and would probably be jeopardised without Norwegian co-operation, although it would have to be on terms acceptable to SOE. This ultimately led to the establishment of what from March 1942 was officially known and jointly recognised as NIC (I), more colloquially called *Kompani Linge*, the 'Linge Company'.

It was from the trickle of refugees that began to arrive in Britain after the occupation of Norway that in August 1940 SOE recruited its first Norwegian volunteers. Two figures were central to this effort: Martin Linge, who had been a Norwegian liaison officer with the British forces at Åndalsnes in April 1940 and from whom the name of the unit came, and J. L. Chaworth-Musters.⁵³ It appears that

⁵³ Linge was injured in the leg and evacuated to England on 30 April. The often-cited claim that appears to have originated from the Norwegian Section history that Linge arrived in Britain in

Chaworth-Musters had meetings with Halvdan Koht, the Norwegian Foreign Minister at the time, and Colonel Birger Ljungberg, the Norwegian Minister of Defence, and from early August it was agreed, certainly on the British side, that Linge should act as the 'liaison officer' between the British and the Norwegian government. His role would be to deal with the recruitment of Norwegians from the Norwegian Armed Forces, to contact Norwegians who had recently arrived in Great Britain, and to look after Norwegian agents in London.⁵⁴ He symbolises SOE's acceptance of the fact that it was dependent on Norwegian support and that it was necessary to have a systematic and ordered approach to recruitment.

Nevertheless, despite early contact with members of the Norwegian government and General Fleischer, the head of *Hærens Overkommando*, the Norwegian Army High Command (HOK) in Britain, along with the efforts of Linge, no more than six Norwegians were recruited by SOE during 1940, far less than the between twenty to thirty it was hoped would be employed.⁵⁵ From January 1941, however, despite some initial difficulties, a orderly process of recruiting Norwegian volunteers from the Norwegian army reception camp at Dumfries in Britain began. In early February the first batch of recruits entered SOE's training network, which was based on the series of specialist training schools (STSs) that were being set up across the country.⁵⁶ In March 1941, this process was placed on a more formal footing when an agreement, re-affirmed in June, was reached with General Fleischer that around

September 1940 is incorrect. See: PRO: memo from D/G Mouse (Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters) to A/D (Colonel G. F. Taylor), 17 August 1940 in HS2/240. HS7/174, 'History of the Norwegian Section'. E. Haavardsholm, *Martin Linge-min morfar*, pp. 98-135. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 59.

⁵⁴ Contemporaneous documents indicate that Koht was contacted around early August and in British eyes agreed the appointment of Linge as 'liaison officer'. Koht also appears to confirm this in his memoirs. SOE, however, also wanted Linge officially seconded to them, and Ljungberg appeared to agree to arrange this, although there is no evidence that it ever happened, to the frustration of SOE. See: PRO: note headed 'Section D', 7 August 1940, memo from D/G Mouse (J.L. Chaworth-Musters) to A/D (Colonel G. F. Taylor), 17 August 1940, note from D/G Mouse to CD (Sir Frank Nelson) 16 September 1940, and paper headed 'Norway', 1 September 1940, all in HS2/240. Paper entitled, 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940 in HS2/128. H. Koht, *For fred og friedom i krigstid 1939-1940*, (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1957), pp. 265-266.

⁵⁵ Six Norwegians had been trained at Station VII, Brickendonbury Manor near Hertford. These were: Rubin Langmo, who had been recruited by Section D, Gunnar Fougner, Nils Nordland, Odd Starheim, Fridjof Pedersen Kviljo and Alf Lindberg. PRO: paper entitled the 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940, in HS2/128. Note headed 'Section D', 7 August 1940 in HS2/240.

⁵⁶ In January 1941, Linge was at the Norwegian Army reception camp in Dumfries from where through liaison with Fleischer he had by the end of the month selected the first party of twenty Norwegians to begin their training on 1 February at the preliminary school at Brock Hall in Northamptonshire. At the last minute, however, Fleischer interfered and held back eight of the party. For details see: NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', weeks ending 28 January, 4 & 25 February 1941 in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: 'SOE Executive Committee Weekly Progress reports', weeks ending 30 January and 6 March 1941 in HS8/216.

twenty-five Norwegians could be recruited from the Norwegian army each month until this special unit reached a ceiling of 250 members, which it did in May 1943. Up to this point regular cohorts of Norwegian recruits entered SOE's training pipeline and those that were deemed suitable ended up at a Holding School, initially at Grendon Hall in Buckinghamshire but from mid-June 1941 at Fawley Court near Henley on Thames, where they awaited assignment to an operation.⁵⁷ By the end of October 1941 a total of 143 Norwegian recruits were spread across SOE's training schools, including sixty-four at Fawley Court.⁵⁸ However, because of the need to prepare for Scandinavian conditions the Norwegian section was in November provided with its own Special Training School (STS 26) near Aviemore in Scotland. It was made up of three sites: STS 26a, Drumintoul Lodge, STS26b, Glenmore Lodge, and STS26c Forest Lodge. In May 1943 these were taken away from SOE's Training Section and placed under the direct responsibility of Lt. Col. Wilson, where they remained until they were disbanded in July 1945. Altogether 654 Norwegians were trained by SOE during its lifetime.⁵⁹ From the beginning, therefore, SOE attempted to instigate an organised and most importantly a joint effort to employ, train, and prepare Norwegians to carry out operations on its behalf. It was ultimately very successful.

The recruitment and training of Norwegian volunteers were initially slow to get underway, although owing to certain important factors both eventually began to accelerate. Firstly, the increase in the number of refugees that began to arrive in Britain during the early part of 1941. Almost 2000 Norwegians crossed the North Sea and arrived in the Shetlands during the year, including 164 in March alone. Over 5000 were also brought to Britain during the war as a result of Allied operations on Norwegian territory, beginning with the 285 that were brought back in spring 1941

⁵⁷ Recruitment continued through February and March and by April 1941 groups of at least twenty were being regularly sent at this time initially to Stodham Park in Hampshire, and ending up at a Holding School at Grendon Hall northeast of Oxford. Kjelstadli claims that 'systematic' recruiting only began in April, but this appears to be incorrect. See: NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section' during the months of January to April in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: HS7/174, 'History of the Norwegian Section'. FA, hylle 20, mappe '4-B-2, P.M. av 12.5.1942, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 63 and Riste, *London Regjeringa*, vol. 1, p. 119.

⁵⁸ There were also six Norwegians at the paramilitary school at Swordlands who were probably being trained for work at the Shetlands Base. PRO: SOE Executive Committee Weekly Progress reports, report for week ending 29 October 1941, in HS8/218.

⁵⁹ Not all of those trained went on to work for SOE. PRO: HS7/175, 'Norwegian Section-History Appendices', Appendix B - 'A Short History of the Linge Company'. HS7/51- 'History of SOE's Training Section'.

after Operation Claymore.⁶⁰ Secondly, the nature of the relationship between SOE and Norwegian authorities. The establishment in January 1941 of the *Forsvarsdepartementets etterretningskontor*, the Norwegian Ministry of Defence Intelligence Office (FD-E) under captain Finn Nagell helped to improve the working relationship between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities in the matter of recruitment.⁶¹ Linked to this was the involvement of both SOE and FD-E in the British amphibious raids that were carried out against economic targets in Norway during 1941. Through co-operation between SOE and FD-E groups of Norwegians were enlisted and trained to take part in these operations, which helped to improve contact, liaison and accelerated the whole process of recruitment.⁶²

The employment of Norwegian volunteers by SOE, however, despite the close contact with FD-E, ran into difficulties at the end of 1941. Notwithstanding the involvement of a large number of its citizens, the Norwegian government was not advised beforehand of Operations Anklet and Archery, the British amphibious raids against targets on its territory in December. Disquiet also broke out amongst the Norwegian contingent on 'Anklet' after the naval and military forces were withdrawn prematurely. Consequently, the Norwegian authorities began intensive efforts to assert greater control over the use of their citizens on special operations. This led in March 1942 to the official recognition of NIC (1) and ultimately resulted in a more collaborative and integrated approach to the employment, organisation and preparation of Norwegian recruits on behalf of SOE. The British accepted that NIC (1) was a special unit of the Norwegian armed forces that was under the joint control of SOE and *Forsvarets Overkommando* (FO), the recently created Norwegian Defence High Command. It was made up of Norwegian personnel seconded from the regular army who were subject to Norwegian discipline administered by a Norwegian

⁶⁰ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', week ending 8 March in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. Information from the London archive of *E-kontoret*, cited in R. Ulstein, *Englands farten*, vol. II, (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1967), p. 375. J. W. Irvine, *The Waves are Free: Shetland/Norway Links 1940-1945*, (Lerwick: Shetland Publishing Co., 1988), p. 34.

⁶¹ PRO: file HS2/238. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', week ending 18 February in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe, 10/3/8b. *Den Norske regjerings virksomhet: fra 9 April til 22 Juni 1945*, vol. IV, *forsvarsdepartementet*, pp. 101-102. E. Haavardsholm, *Martin Linge-min morfar*, pp.148-186.

⁶² Olav Riste believes that the raids stimulated SOE to increase its recruitment and training, which prior to this had been of a more casual nature. Linge was based in the offices of FD-E and both Linge and Nagell were involved in recruiting Norwegians for service with the British. See: PRO: HS7/175, 'Norwegian Section-History Appendices', Appendix B - 'A Short History of the 'Linge Company' and Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. 1, p. 119.

officer under the authority of the Norwegian Commander in Chief. The men were trained at STS 26 under the auspices of SOE but were sent to Norway on operations under the joint authority of both SOE and FO.⁶³ Subversive operations in Norway were therefore carried out on a partnership basis and symbolised not simply British and Allied military interest in this theatre but also the level of co-operation and support that SOE received from the Norwegian authorities. The events that led to the creation of NIC (1) also illustrated how important the nature of the relationship between SOE and Norwegian authorities was to the development and implementation of clandestine operations in this theatre.

From spring 1942, when SOE activity in Norway began to take off, it was NIC (1) that provided the teams that were sent in to destroy key economic and industrial targets in the country, the organisers and radio operators that prepared and worked with local resistance organisations, and the groups that co-operated with Milorg in preparation for the eventual liberation. Between August 1940 and May 1945, 530 Norwegians were recruited to serve on behalf of SOE, although during the same period 160 never reached the required standard and were returned to the Norwegian army. At the end of hostilities in early May 1945, the unit's 'effective strength' was 245 men, close to its original target.⁶⁴ Altogether the company lost fifty-seven men, fifty-one on active service. It, therefore, had a survival rate of ninety percent, which compares very favourably with a rate for SOE recruits across occupied Europe of between sixty and seventy per cent.⁶⁵ This indicates that, despite the difficult conditions found in occupied Norway, the use of Norwegian recruits by SOE, prepared, trained, and sent to Norway in collaboration with the Norwegian military

⁶³ The claim that through the involvement of Harry Sporborg and Trygve Lie it was agreed that the Norwegian recruits at Fawley Court were given official recognition as NIC (1) in July 1941 is based on J.S. Wilson's history of the Norwegian Section. Wilson was responsible for SOE's training at this time, but there appears to be no available contemporaneous sources to confirm this. The minutes of the ANCC meeting of 4 March 1942 clearly state that 'it was agreed that the special unit should be referred to as "Norwegian Independent Co (1)" – "NIC (1)" and that the name "Linge Company" may be used unofficially'. It is only after this that the title NIC (1) is used in official documents. See: PRO: minutes of ANCC of 4 March 1942 and of a special meeting held on 13 May 1942 in HS2/138. HS7/174, 'Norwegian Section-History'. NHM: replies by Colonel J.S. Wilson to a joint note by Major Helle and Major Hampton of STS 26, 31 March 1942, in FOIV archive, boks 31, mappe, 4-B-1. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 63. Haavardsholm, *Martin Linge-min morfar*, p. 197. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 198.

⁶⁴ PRO: HS7/175, 'Norwegian Section – History', Appendix B - 'A Short History of the Linge Company'.

⁶⁵ David Stafford, *Secret Agent: Britain's Wartime Secret Service*, (London: BBC, 2002), p. 46.

authorities, was an effective and comparatively successfully means of undertaking its operations.

SOE also had to find ways to transport its agents to Norway. Therefore, in the autumn of 1940 a small naval base was established on the Shetland Islands from where Norwegian fishing boats and later American submarine chasers were used to transport SOE teams, arms and equipment to the Norwegian coastline and to pick-up agents or refugees who wished to return to Britain. There are a number of anecdotal and human-interest accounts of what has become known as the ‘Shetlands Bus’ service, but few scholarly accounts based on original sources. A detailed chronicle of its history, based on sources from British and Norwegian archives, can be found and referred to in Appendix C.⁶⁶

The base was extremely important for SOE. The concept of using Norwegian fishing boats to transport men and equipment to Norway was not new, but the organisation and establishment of a permanent base was. This is a further indication of the value that from the summer of 1940 was placed on Norway as a potential theatre for subversive operations, and of the growing urgency to accelerate such activities. Between late 1940 and mid 1944, the North Sea was the primary route for transporting SOE teams to Norway. As Special Duty flights were severely limited owing to both a lack of available aircraft and because Norway was both geographically and strategically peripheral, and therefore not a priority, it was the use of the fishing boats and later the submarine chasers out of the Shetlands Base that effectively allowed SOE to continue to operate in this theatre. Its long coastline and the relatively short 180-mile trip from the Shetlands also provided a large and important gateway in and out of occupied Norway. Moreover, the coastal waters off the Norwegian seaboard, which contained many small, uninhabited offshore islands (skerries), were an important locus for operations against enemy forces and shipping, often using vessels from the Shetlands Base.⁶⁷ The base was also another example of the positive working relationship that developed between SOE and the Norwegian

⁶⁶ See: Appendix C, ‘A History of the Shetlands Base: Autumn 1940-July 1945’, pp. 319-322. D. Howarth, *The Shetlands Bus*, (Lerwick: The Shetland Times Ltd., 1998). F. Sælen, *Shetlands Larsen*, (Oslo: E. G. Mortensens Forlag, 1982). Sir Brooks Richards, ‘Britain and Norwegian Resistance: clandestine sea transport’, in P. Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, (London: HMSO, 1995), pp. 161-166.

⁶⁷ For example see details of the ‘Maundy’, ‘Vestige’, ‘Barbara’, and ‘Sleeping Beauty’ operations in Appendix E, ‘Sea-borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945’, pp., 328-333.

authorities, who provided the fishing boats and crews, and an early indication of the collaboration that would develop between SOE and the RN in this theatre.

According to the Shetlands Base log a total of 202 trips to the Norwegian coast and back were attempted between November 1940 and May 1945 by Norwegian fishing vessels and the submarine chasers. Of these 170 involved SOE and thirty-two were on behalf of SIS. Altogether 191 SOE agents and almost 300 tons of stores were delivered to the Norwegian coast and over sixty agents and 330 refugees picked up.⁶⁸ Norwegian representatives were initially located at both Lerwick and Aberdeen to take part along with the British in the examination of these new arrivals to the country, although from the summer of 1941 this process was transferred to the Royal Patriotic School in London.⁶⁹ SOE also opened a second base at Burghead in Scotland from where five additional trips to Norway were attempted between November 1942 and January 1943, whilst SIS opened its own base at Peterhead from where it made twenty seven trips to Norway between July 1941 and November 1943.⁷⁰

The total number of trips across the North Sea was, however, restricted by certain factors. The vessels could not sail between the end of May and late August because of the long daylight hours found in this northerly region during these months, which made operating off the Norwegian coast too dangerous. The number of fishing boats available at any one time was also extremely small. In the three seasons between 1940 and 1943, there were usually only about six Norwegian fishing boats that were in a suitable condition to go to sea. These small wooden vessels were also not only vulnerable to the extreme conditions found in the North Sea but also to attacks from German aircraft. The worst single disaster was in November 1941 when the fishing boat, 'Blia' disappeared with seven crew and thirty-six refugees on board. Altogether at least eight fishing boats and forty-four crewmen were eventually lost. It was for this reason that in autumn 1943 the three faster and better protected American submarine chasers were acquired and manned by Norwegian crews until the end of the war, fortunately without further losses.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the casualty rate of the

⁶⁸ NHM: list of Shetland sea-sorties in SOE archive, Boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c.

⁶⁹ Nagell: Beretning om E-kontorets virksomhet 1.1.41-1.7.44, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, P. 111. Irvine, *The Waves are Free*, p. 34.

⁷⁰ According to Berit Nøkleby SIS's first sailing from Peterhead was in July 1941, and the last in November 1943. PRO: HS2/182, 'Shetlands Base'. HS2/175, 'Norwegian History- Appendices', Appendix A – 'A Short History of the Shetlands Base'. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 61-70.

⁷¹ NHM: list of Shetland-sea sorties in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe, 10/5/6c. PRO: HS7/182,

men working on the fishing vessels was higher than for the NIC (1) teams that were sent to Norway.⁷²

This collection of facts and figures is significant because it indicates how valuable the Shetlands Base and the route across the North sea was for SOE. Between November 1940 and May 1943 there were only twenty Special Duty air sorties to Norway compared with eighty-five trips from the Shetlands Base.⁷³ Therefore, without the service that these fishing vessels provided, SOE activity in Norway would have been significantly curtailed. In August 1941, the British Joint Planning Staff (JPS) recognised that although Norway was only likely to be an area of ‘subsidiary’ operations, the process of organising a secret army should continue as it was possible ‘to introduce a large proportion of the arms and equipment by sea’.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, the idea of using Norwegian fishing vessels manned by Norwegian crews was not new. It can be traced back at least to September 1939 when Section D, through its Scandinavian section began exploring the possibilities of using trawlers or drifters for smuggling ‘devices’ into Norway.⁷⁵ This project never got off the ground but in the spring of 1940 Section D again considered linking England and Norway ‘by means of Norwegian and Danish fishing boats, a number of which are in the hands of the Admiralty’.⁷⁶ Consequently, from May Section D and soon afterwards SIS began using fishing vessels to transport men and equipment to Norway,⁷⁷ and through the summer of 1940, a small ‘ferry service’ continued across the North Sea, in order to deliver agents, establish arms dumps, and contact resistance

‘Shetlands Base-a Summary of Operations’. SOE Executive Committee Weekly Progress reports, weeks ending 21 January and 25 March 1942 in HS8/220. Note from SN/S (Major F. W. Ram) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), 23 January 1942 and letter from Finn Nagell, 18 December 1941 in HS2/139.

⁷² For details see: Appendix E, ‘Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945’, pp. 328-333.

⁷³ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson’s mappe 10/8/1, Appendix K, ‘Summary of Air Operations to Norway 1942-1945’. List of Shetland sea-sorties in boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c.

⁷⁴ PRO: JP (41) 649, ‘Special Operations Executive’, report by JPS, 9 August 1941, in CAB79/13.

⁷⁵ Frank Carr and August Courtauld began efforts to organise smuggling between the Shetlands and Norway. Gerald Holdsworth travelled to Norway in an attempt to recruit Norwegian fishermen and made contact with Nielsen Moe, who owned a company called ‘Olaf Preserving Co.’. The plan was to smuggle devices into Norway in tins. For details see: PRO: file HS7/4- D Section.

⁷⁶ PRO: paper entitled ‘Operations in Scandinavia’, 14 April 1940 in HS2/239.

⁷⁷ The ‘Norwegian Expedition’ used a Danish-fishing vessel, the ‘Lady’, obtained from the Admiralty’s ‘Small Boats Pool’. The boat was re-named V.2.S and towed another boat the *Snal*. V.2.S was later re-registered as the *Hospitz* whilst in Norway. The first joint SIS/Norwegian intelligence operation left in a boat called the *Nordlys* on 14 August 1940. This Norwegian fishing boat had arrived from Bremnes in early July carrying, amongst others, the British consul from Stavanger. For details see: PRO: ‘Log of V.2.S – Aberdeen to Norway and returning’, 17 June 1940, in HS2/242. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten*, vol.1, pp. 92-95.

groups.⁷⁸ When Section D was finally subsumed into SO2 in October 1940 the practice of using fishing vessels as a means of transport was therefore already established and consequently SOE did not start with a completely blank sheet in Norway.⁷⁹

Prior to the autumn of 1940, however, the use of fishing boats was ad hoc and improvised. The formation of SOE led to a co-ordinated effort to set up a permanent base on the Shetlands from where contact with Norway could be maintained, a fleet of fishing boats harboured, with residence for the Norwegian crews and SOE agents, and arms and equipment stored. A realisation of the military potential of such a site also meant that there were joint discussions over its establishment involving SOE, SIS, Admiralty, MI 5, and indirectly the Norwegian government. The Norwegian fishing boats had been taken over by the Norwegian Department of Trade, which then hired them to the British, although it appears that the Norwegian government was not initially aware of what these vessels were being used for. They were then incorporated into the Admiralty's Small Vessels Pool from where they were allocated to NID (C), part of the Directorate of Naval Intelligence, for use by SOE and SIS.⁸⁰ Supplying the base and boats with stores and equipment was the responsibility of an army unit called Military Establishment No. 7 (M.E. 7), which was up and running by the end of 1940.⁸¹

The use of these fishing vessels, whilst remaining under local control and enjoying a high measure of independence, was therefore very much a collaborative project.⁸² The flotilla of Norwegian fishing vessels was operated under the local supervision of the Admiral Commanding the Orkneys and Shetlands (ACOS).⁸³ The

⁷⁸ For details see: PRO: 'Log of V.2.S – Aberdeen to Norway and returning', 17 June 1940, in HS2/242. A. Haga, *Natt på norske kysten: den hemmelige militære nordsjøtrafikk 1940-1943*, (Oslo: Cappelen, 1979), pp. 27-39. Haga, *Skygger over utvær*. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol.1, pp.99-101.

⁷⁹ Bickham Sweet-Escott claims that 'in the summer of 1940 the Balkan section of "D" was the only really operative part of the organisation'. No mention is made of Scandinavia. B. Sweet-Escott, *Baker Street Regular*, (Fakenham: Cox & Wyman, 1965), pp. 34 & 39. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 46.

⁸⁰ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled 'Rebellion in Norway', undated in HS2/218. Note headed 'Section D', 7 August 1940 in HS2/240. Note on a conference held on 24 October 1940, which included G.3, A.1, D/Navy, and D/N in HS2/240. HS7/182-Shetlands Base. Letter from Charles Hambro to Admiral R. J. P. Brind, A.C.N.S. (H), ref. CD/4459, 9 February 1943, with attached memo dated 8 February 1943 in HS8/827. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 59. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen*, p. 284.

⁸¹ PRO: HS7/175, Norwegian Section-History, Appendix A – 'A History of the Shetlands Base'.

⁸² PRO: Letter from Charles Hambro to Admiral R. J. P. Brind, A.C.N.S. (H), ref. CD/4459, 9 February 1943, with attached memo dated 8 February 1943 in HS8/827.

⁸³ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's mappe 10/8/1, Appendix 'Q', 'Norwegian Liaison with Naval Authorities'.

base was used jointly for most of the war by both SIS and SOE, and its first commander L.H. Mitchell was a SIS officer, even though the first trip on behalf of SIS was not until September 1941.⁸⁴ SOE operations from the base were under the control of the Norwegian section, although the crews of the fishing vessels whilst trained by SOE eventually became the responsibility of the Norwegian authorities. From spring 1942, as with NIC (1) and as part of an effort to impose tighter control over the use of Norwegian volunteers for operations in Norway, the crews were placed under Norwegian discipline with a Norwegian officer stationed at the base. By the summer the crews constituted what was officially called the Norwegian Naval Independent Unit (NNIU), which was in the summer of 1944 placed under Norwegian naval command.⁸⁵ Close liaison with the Admiralty was maintained through the local naval officer on the Shetlands and the care and maintenance of the flotilla eventually became a naval commitment.⁸⁶ The submarine chasers were provided by the American navy.⁸⁷

The North Sea was not, however, the only route for delivering SOE agents to Norway. Many crossed the border from Sweden by train, vehicle, or on foot, having been recruited in Sweden or transported to Stockholm using the small number of aircraft that provided an intermittent link between the Swedish capital and Scotland during the war.⁸⁸ Agents and equipment were also dropped into Norway by the Special Duty Squadrons from Bomber Command that operated on behalf of SOE and SIS. The first flight to the country was in February 1941 when a SIS agent was parachuted into southern Norway. SOE's first airdrop was not until January 1942, after which a further 1,310 sorties were attempted of which 747 were completed successfully. These dropped a total of 199 agents, similar to the total transported

⁸⁴ The first SIS operation landed in Norway by fishing boat from the Shetlands on 18 September 1941 was 'Gamma', Billy Forthun and Ingebrigt Valderhaug. Berit Nøkleby refers to four trips in the 1940-41 season that have the reference 'SS'. This was SOE's codename for John Rognes and Milorg and does not stand for Secret Services. NHM: List of Shetland sea sorties in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 59-60, 166.

⁸⁵ For details see: Appendix C, 'A History of the Shetlands Base 1940-1945', pp. 319-322.

⁸⁶ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's file, Appendix 'Q', 'Norwegian Liaison with Naval Authorities'.

⁸⁷ PRO: HS7/175, Norwegian Section-History, Appendix A - 'A Short History of the Shetlands Base'. HS7/182-Shetlands Base.

⁸⁸ The first flight between Sweden and Britain was in May 1940, and a civil air route was eventually set-up between Scotland and Stockholm. The Norwegians provided several planes and were anxious to ensure the route was kept open. By the end of the war 3,309 passengers had been brought over from Stockholm using the Norwegian planes. See: B. Hafsten [et al], *Flyalarm, luftkrigen over Norge 1939-1945*, (Oslo: Sten & Stenersen, 1991), p. 294. W. Mohr, 'The contribution of the Norwegian air forces', in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 94-95.

from the Shetlands Base, and a huge number of containers and packages, although seventy percent of this material was not delivered until the final nine months of the war.⁸⁹ There were two squadrons, 138 and 161, which Bomber Command allocated for special duty operations, but even by the spring of 1944 there was still only a minimum of thirty six aircraft available for such operations in the whole of northwest Europe.⁹⁰ The prioritisation of strategic bombing severely restricted SOE's capability,⁹¹ and the low priority accorded to Norway, especially as the planning and preparations for Operation Overlord gained momentum, meant that special duty sorties on behalf of SOE to this theatre up until the final months of the war were extremely limited. In 1943 a total of over 600 sorties were flown to France as the build up to Overlord began, whilst only twenty-four were flown to Norway.⁹²

The long flights to Norway across the North Sea during the dark winter months, when there was a high risk of bad weather, cloud, snow, and icing, were also undoubtedly extremely hazardous. This did not, however, restrict the number of sorties flown during the final months of the war, by which time it had been accepted that the resistance would be required to play a significant role in the country's liberation. Local groups were in desperate need of training, arms and equipment and consequently after the assault phase of Overlord was complete and therefore more aircraft were available, there was a huge increase in special duty flights to Norway on behalf of SOE. From the beginning of November 1944 until early May 1945, close to 600 successful sorties were flown to this theatre compared to just eleven in 1942.⁹³ This massive but late increase is perhaps best highlighted by the night of 30-31 December 1944 when there were fifty-two aircraft in the air over eastern Norway and Nordmarka, the wooded area to the north of Oslo.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ The first airdrop of SOE agents into Norway was on 2 January 1942 when 'Cheese' and 'Biscuit', Odd Starheim and Andreas Fasting, were dropped by parachute near Sirdalsvatn, north of Flekkefjord in southern Norway. The first SIS drop into Norway had been on the night of 13/14 February 1941 when Sverre Midtskau, Operation Skylark, was dropped from a two-engined Whitley aeroplane. See: PRO: HS2/151, Operation Cheese 1942-1945. NHM: boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's mappe, Appendix K, 'Summary of Air Operations to Norway 1942-1945'. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 17.

⁹⁰ Foot, *The Special Operations Executive*, pp. 132-133. Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 75.

⁹¹ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 61.

⁹² Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 473. NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's mappe, Appendix K, 'Summary of Air Operations to Norway'.

⁹³ NHM: boks 11, Wilson's mappe, 10/8/1, Appendix K, 'Summary of Air Operations to Norway 1942-1945'.

⁹⁴ A.F. Egner and S. W. Aasland, *BBC: Kanonen spiller Chopin: Flybårne forsyninger til Milorg i Norge 1940-1945*, (Oslo: Eget Forlag, 1997), p. 38.

There were also the Catalina flying boats from the Royal Norwegian 333 Squadron based at Woodhaven in Scotland that flew sorties to northern Norway, but these were primarily on behalf of SIS. Only three missions were flown for SOE and these were to coastal areas that were too distant for the Shetlands fishing boats to reach safely.⁹⁵ The priority accorded SIS also did not significantly affect Special Duty flights for SOE. A total of only fifty-two sorties were flown to Norway on behalf of SIS during the war, and in every year between 1942 and 1945 considerably more airdrops were made on behalf of SOE than SIS, even if the delivery of arms and equipment is excluded.⁹⁶ It was the country's strategically peripheral position that ultimately determined the number and distribution of Special Duty flights to this theatre.

The growth in airdrops to Norway during the final months of the occupation was made possible by an increase in the availability of the number of air squadrons, beginning with a special squadron of six B-24 Liberators loaned from the US 8th Air Force and led by the Norwegian born American Air Force pilot Bernt Balchen. This flew a total of sixty-four sorties to the country during the summer of 1944. After the liberation of France further squadrons were freed up, including in the New Year two from the 492nd Bombardment Group from the United States of America Air Force (USAAF).⁹⁷ Nevertheless, in the three years from the autumn of 1940 until the end of 1943 an average of less than one sortie per month was flown on behalf of SOE to Norway. Consequently, prior to 1944 SOE's activities, *coup de main* attacks or the organising and equipping of resistance groups, were very dependent on what could be transported using the Norwegian fishing boats based at the Shetlands Base. These were largely unprotected, slow and often-unreliable vessels that could only operate for eight months of the year and when conditions in the North Sea permitted. This alone illustrates the huge difficulties that SOE faced in operating in this theatre.

⁹⁵ Twelve operations were flown on behalf of SIS. See: Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 166, 174. For details of the SOE operations see: Appendix F 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-358.

⁹⁶ PRO: COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations executive Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 166.

⁹⁷ The new squadrons were: 190, 196, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 570, 620 and 644 squadrons, all equipped with either Stirling or Halifax aircraft. It was 856 and 858 Bombardment Squadron (H) of the 492nd Bombardment Group that flew 150 sorties to Norway during the final months of the war. See: B. Hafsten [et al], *Flyalarm*, p.275. B. Balchen, *Come North with Me*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1959), pp. 268-273.

Conclusion

SOE was formed in the summer of 1940 within a climate that was supportive to the potential of irregular and subversive operations and as a response to Britain's worsening military and strategic position. At a time when, after the collapse of France, Britain was weak and isolated in Europe, the creation of a new agency that could kindle the seeds of revolt within the occupied countries of Europe was seen as a valuable additional weapon. Sabotage, particularly through the efforts of Section D, had been used as a means to apply economic pressure to Germany, but the formation of SOE gave sabotage and subversion a more prominent and significant position. The birth of this new organisation was therefore directly linked to the strategic conditions of the time.

Soon after its formation SOE also continued the interest in Norway that had been pioneered by Section D and MI (R). The creation of a Scandinavian section with staff employed largely from organisations that were previously involved in the implementation of economic pressure against Germany through Norway or carrying out clandestine and subversive operations in the country also ensured a continued enthusiasm for the use of these activities in this theatre.

The increased strategic and military significance that was placed on clandestine operations at this time also meant that SOE urgently began to look for the means that would allow it to commence its work. It was this, and the opportunities that it was believed Norway would offer, that led to the establishment of the Shetlands Base and early attempts to recruit and train Norwegians. Both these small endeavours are important, however, not only because they show, at a time of limited resources, the methods that SOE employed, but because they also symbolise the importance of co-operation and collaboration: it was clear that this new organisation could not operate in this theatre without support. The next step for SOE was to articulate its aims and intentions for Norway, to put in place a policy that would provide direction.

CHAPTER TWO

SOE POLICY IN NORWAY 1940-1945: THE COMBINATION OF SHORT AND LONG-TERM OBJECTIVES

Introduction

SOE's origins were strategic and following on from this the creation of its Scandinavian Section, the Shetlands Base, and the attempts to recruit Norwegians were the result of a determination to increase clandestine operations in Norway, a country that was deemed ideally suited for such activities. These operations could not, however, proceed without some direction and therefore through a series of directives, SOE also set out its policy for Norway. This chapter will analyse the evolution of this policy, which has often been criticised by Norwegian historians and largely ignored by British historians, and show how its development was closely and principally linked to wider strategic developments.¹

SOE's military contribution was in broad terms mapped out within the first few months of its existence although its role and value to Allied operations changed as the war progressed. This was also the case with its policy for Norway. From December 1940, in line with the proposed contribution of sabotage, subversion, and organised resistance in the occupied countries to Britain's forward strategy, it took on the essential structure that it would retain for the rest of the war. From this point onwards policy consisted of a combination of short and long-term objectives. In the short-term the aim was, through sabotage, propaganda, support for amphibious and air raids in Norway, to assist in the debilitation of German military strength. These activities would also help to tie down Axis forces in this peripheral theatre and thereby impose a further, unwelcome strain on enemy resources. In the longer-term the aim was to organise small guerrilla units, based on local resistance groups, that would be trained, armed and equipped by SOE. These would together constitute a secret army that would be preserved to enable it, through carrying out operations

¹ William Mackenzie and George Cruickshank make only scattered references to the series of policy documents on Norway. Norwegian publications are much better, although without access to SOE files in Britain they miss some important papers, especially early documents produced prior to December 1940. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 205-206, 215, 671. Cruickshank, *SOE in Scandinavia*, pp. 172, 176, 241-242. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 91-93, 95-105, 174-190. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 108, 114-115.

behind enemy lines, to support an eventual landing by regular forces in Norway; one of a series of landings across the Continent.

As the conflict in Europe progressed, however, and particularly after the entry into the war of the Soviet Union and the USA as allies with their vast resources in men and material, the strategic contribution of SOE and particularly Norway changed. This had a knock-on influence on policy. Although the combination of short and long-term objectives remained, the significance of these aims within the wider context altered, which ultimately had a direct effect on local operations.

This chapter will begin with an analysis of SOE's policy in the period from the autumn of 1940 to the end of 1941. It will show that by the end of 1940 it had taken on its fundamental shape, the combination of short and long-term objectives. During this period, however, there were two additional factors that influenced SOE's plans for Norway. The first of these were concerns over a possible German invasion of Britain from northwest Europe, including Norway. The second was Winston Churchill's 'obsession' with the country,² which began in 1939, was resurrected in the late summer of 1940, and was given added momentum during 1941 by Soviet and British calls for a Second Front. Both factors temporarily gave additional impetus to the long-term aim of organising a secret army. But as will be shown this fixation with Norway also led to difficulties for SOE as it meant that its aim of attacking economic and military targets was opposed by the Prime Minister, who believed it would stir up the country and thereby jeopardise any prospect of a British landing.

During the summer of 1941, however, the British planning staff scaled-back the role of secret armies within their strategic plans and decided that an eventual landing by Allied forces on the Continent as part of a final and decisive military offensive would be concentrated in northwest France and the Low Countries. Therefore, by the end of 1941, notwithstanding continued pressure from the Prime Minister, the remote possibility of a British landing in Norway to liberate part or all of the country had effectively been sidelined, where it would remain until May 1945. Consequently, SOE would temporarily downgrade the importance of its plans to organise and prepare a secret army.

² In March 1942, Sir Alan Brooke was made chief of the British Chiefs of Staff. He was therefore Britain's 'top soldier' and 'Churchill's principal military adviser'. Through his war diary he consistently vented his frustration over Churchill's interest in Norway. A. Danchev & D. Todman (eds.), *War Diaries 1939-1945: Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke*, (London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 2001), p. 438.

The second section of this chapter will analyse the development of SOE's policy in the period between early 1942 and the end of 1943. This will show that with the entry of the USA into the war and with the strategic and operational focal point moving to the Mediterranean and in the long-term toward an invasion of northwest Europe, Norway increasingly became a subsidiary theatre of war. This meant that the effort to organise a secret army, although ongoing, was of secondary importance. At the same time the short-term objective of attacking economic and military targets in the country and tying down enemy forces within this peripheral theatre became increasingly valuable as every effort was made to weaken Germany and help create the conditions that would allow the implementation of Overlord. Moreover, the arrival of a large part of the German surface fleet in Norway in early 1942 and its threat to the Arctic convoys, not only increased the significance of Norwegian coastal waters but also SOE's attacks against military targets, particularly the German battleship the *Tirpitz*.

By 1944, Norway was firmly under the dominant influence of Overlord. Consequently, the liberation of the country had to await the successful realisation of the Allied campaign in northwest Europe, which meant that the forces required to enforce a re-occupation might not be available until well after military operations on the Continent were complete. At the same time post-war considerations, particularly the protection of Norwegian industries and infrastructure from German destruction became increasingly significant. It was within this context, as the last section of this chapter will show, that SOE's policy toward Norway changed yet again. The long-term objective, the preparation of an indigenous clandestine army, became the priority and short-term policy was modified. Sabotage became tactical and rather than helping prepare the way for Overlord it was linked to Allied operations on the Continent. Through to the liberation in May 1945, therefore, the fundamental structure of SOE policy in this theatre was directly and intrinsically shaped by Norway's relationship to the unfolding of Allied strategy and operations across Europe.

I

SOE Policy in Norway 1940-1941: from Rebellion to a Secret Army

After the fall of France the British Prime Minister and the COS began to build a strategic framework that reflected not only the desperate situation the nation found itself in, but also within which it could move forward.³ In the spring of 1940, even as France collapsed, the COS had begun to review Britain's future strategy in the war against Germany. The assumption that Britain and France together would eventually be stronger than the Germans was self-evidently no longer applicable,⁴ and by mid-June, with no major allies and facing a nation with a huge superiority in resources and position, Britain could no longer undertake large-scale land operations in Europe. Any forward strategy therefore had to overcome this imbalance and eventually create the conditions that would allow a final offensive on the Continent leading to the ultimate objective, victory over Germany.⁵ It was within this context that the concept of creating 'widespread revolt in the conquered territories' was seen as an important additional 'indirect method', along with economic pressure and strategic bombing, that could be used to undermine German military strength.⁶ The British Planning staff and MI (R) both produced several documents during the late spring and early summer of 1940 that examined the possibility of organised rebellions. These papers reflected a belief that there was extensive anti-German feeling across Europe that if equipped and supported could be used to facilitate operations by British forces. The corollary of this was that subversive activities within the occupied countries should be undertaken with the eventually aim of promoting open armed resistance that would 'either be a forerunner to, or an auxiliary of direct military action'.⁷

In line with this between June and November 1940 a series of policy documents were produced initially within Section D and then SOE's Scandinavian

³Control of the war fell to Churchill and the COS machinery; it was a corporate effort. Small nations, such as Norway, had very little access to or influence over this process even when it involved their interests. See: Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 47-48.

⁴ Imlay, 'Allied Economic Intelligence and Strategy during the Phoney War', p. 107.

⁵ Willmott, *June 1944*, pp. 19-20.

⁶ PRO: WP (40) 168, 'British Strategy in a Certain Eventuality', in CAB 66/7, and discussed at WM (40) 141, 27 May 1940, in CAB 65/7.

⁷ The MI (R) files refer to a number of British staff papers on this matter such as COS (40) 454 (JP), and JP (40) 238, 13 June 1940. Not everybody, however, shared this belief in the potential of organised rebellions. PRO: papers entitled 'Aide -Memoir on the Co-ordination of Subversive Activities in the Conquered Territories', 6 July 1940, and 'Organisation of Rebellions in Enemy Occupied Territory', 5 July 1940, both in HS8/259. See also: 'Appreciation of the Possibilities of Revolt in Certain Specified Countries by March 1941', 25 July 1940, in HS8/259.

section outlining the case for an uprising in Norway in early 1941.⁸ The aim was to encourage local groups led by Norwegians trained in Britain, supplied with arms and ammunition from the Shetlands, to break into open revolt, attacking communications, small local garrisons, and stores of arms and equipment. Britain would provide assistance and encouragement through raids, but not a full-scale landing, and eventually the demoralised German forces in Norway would be overwhelmed. By November 1940, however, this ambitious concept had been reined back owing to a realisation that the country was not yet ready for a general rising, and in response to changes in British strategy during that autumn. Consequently, in December 1940, SOE's policy toward Norway took a new direction and the concept of rebellion was dropped.

At the heart of British military doctrine was this conviction that it was necessary to wear down and weaken Germany before Britain and her allies could once again undertake major land operations on the Continent. At the time this could only be done through a combination of indirect methods such as economic pressure, air action, propaganda, 'amphibious operations against the enemy's coastline', and small peripheral campaigns. Irregular and subversive activities would contribute in two ways. Firstly, as part of a policy of attrition, the undermining of the enemy's fighting capability through sabotage and containing and extending his forces, and secondly, uprisings by secret armies that would coincide with and augment eventual land operations across Europe. The earlier concept of 'sowing the seeds of revolt' was therefore abandoned and subversive activity would be supplementary to 'regular operations' as part of a 'general policy'.⁹

It was within this context that on 25 November 1940 SOE's first directive was issued. A product of liaison between SOE, the Joint Planning Staff (JPS) and the COS its objective was to provide guidance 'as to the direction in which subversive activities can best assist' strategy. In the short-term the priority was, alongside the elimination of Italy, to continue to 'wear down' Germany by 'amphibious and other operations within the limits of our resources', including the use of subversive

⁸ PRO: paper entitled 'Rebellion in Norway', 7 June 1940 in HS2/240. Paper entitled 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled, 'Norway', 1 September 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled, 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940 in HS2/128.

⁹ PRO: WP (40) 362, 'Future Strategy', and 'Appreciation by the Chiefs of Staff Committee', 4 September 1940, in CAB 66/11. COS 647 (JP), 'Future Strategy', note by the Joint Planning Sub-Committee, 21 August 1940, in CAB 80/16. COS minutes, 31 August 1940, in CAB 79/6, cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 55.

operations, such as creating economic disorganisation, to undermine enemy strength and morale. Over the longer-term SOE would prepare organisations in the occupied countries, Holland, Belgium, France and southern Norway, which could undertake co-ordinated revolts in co-operation with the eventual landing of British forces. These 'secret armies' would be preserved until the moment when their actions could augment 'decisive' operations against Germany.¹⁰ It was an ambitious document but one that was in step with British policy at this time and the role it was believed that sabotage and subversion could ultimately play in the war against Germany.¹¹

From an early stage Britain had recognised the economic importance of Norway to Germany in any future military conflict. And well before the outbreak of war strategic targets in the country, such as the transportation of Swedish iron-ore and the production of whale and fish oil, had already been identified.¹² During the spring of 1940, as the momentum to apply economic pressure against Germany gathered pace, the MEW and the Inter-Services Project Board (ISPB), a predecessor of SOE, highlighted the value of the specialist metals produced in Norway,¹³ which directly led in the late spring of 1940 to the Section D operation against the production of ferro-chrome at A/S Bjølvfossen near Ålvik.¹⁴ There was also a growing belief, probably nourished by reports that Section D had received through its contacts in Norway, that the country was increasingly dissatisfied with German rule and therefore there was the potential for organised resistance.¹⁵

¹⁰ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in Cab 80/56. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 42-49.

¹¹ The first directive has been criticised 'as reflecting little more than the aspirations of SOE itself'. See: N. Wylie, 'An Amateur learns his Job? Special Operations Executive in Portugal 1940-1942', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2001, Vol. 36, (3), July 2001, p. 443. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 46-47.

¹² In December 1938 the Industrial Intelligence Centre (IIC), in a survey of German economic vulnerability in war, identified Norway as supplying 69% of Germany's whale and fish oil. The supply of Swedish iron ore had been intensively studied since the early 1930s, and was seen as 'Germany's Achilles' heel. A significant amount of this product was supplied through Narvik. See: PRO: 'German Import Trade', document of Department of Overseas Trade (IIC), ref. ICF/265, 20 December 1938 in FO 837/427. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 304. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 5.

¹³ PRO: Ferroy Alloys-First Report, April 1940 in FO837/108. COS (40) 334, 'Irregular Activities in Norway', report by ISPB, 9 May 1940 in CAB 80/10.

¹⁴ The Section D/MI (R) operation against the power plant for A/S Bjølvfossen in June 1940 stopped ferro-chrome production for four weeks. PRO: COS (40) 323, 5 May 1940, copy of a letter dated 3 May from the MEW to the Admiralty, in CAB 80/10. Paper entitled 'Norwegian Expedition', (undated but probably early May 1940) in HS2/ 241, and 'Log of V.2.S – Aberdeen to Norway and Return', 17 June 1940, in HS2/242. Letter from A/S Bjølvfossen 8 June 1970, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 100.

¹⁵ During the summer of 1940 SOE developed contacts in western Norway and by early August 1940, it claimed that there were already 3000 men in the Bergen district ready for action. See: PRO: paper entitled, 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940, in HS2/ 128.

It was within this background that in December 1940 SOE's Scandinavian section produced a paper entitled, 'Norwegian Policy'. This is a defining document because it lays down the core of SOE's policy, the combination of short and long-term aims that would be the blueprint for its operations in Norway for the rest of the war. It has been criticised as unsuitable for Norwegian conditions, but at the time it was in step with the role envisaged for subversive operations within Britain's forward strategy, as expressed in SOE's first directive, and the possibilities that Norway appeared to offer for clandestine operations. The longer-term objective was to prepare and preserve the indigenous resistance, primarily across southern Norway, 'for simultaneous uprisings to assist either a landing by a British or Allied Expeditionary Force, or, an incipient German collapse'. The short-term aim was to carry out sabotage, both active and passive, and assist amphibious raids and air raids. Small-scale and unobtrusive sabotage would be undertaken by groups within Norway, whilst teams from the UK would attack 'special targets'. In both cases these operations would not be allowed to threaten the longer-term process of preparing local resistance groups. The Norwegian authorities had no involvement in the development of this policy and therefore no influence over its make-up.¹⁶ Its origins were firmly rooted in a British strategy that would be applied across occupied Europe.

At this time there was, however, another factor that also influenced SOE's plans for Norway. Whilst a German invasion remained a possibility, the strategic importance of defending the UK remained a priority.¹⁷ Therefore, SOE's December paper emphasises preparing resistance groups not only to assist a landing in Norway but also to 'impede any German attempt to invade Great Britain'.¹⁸ Norway was seen as a place where a 'workable machine' was being implemented that could hinder the activities of any German forces that took part in an invasion of Britain. The military importance placed on the development of local resistance groups that could operate behind enemy lines is reflected in SOE's defence and the Foreign Office's acceptance

¹⁶ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, signed by SZ (Lt. Col. H.N. Spørborg) in HS2/128. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 91-93. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 108, Kraglund and Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. 6, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 26.

¹⁷ WP (40) 352, 3 September 1940, in CAB 66/11, as cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 62-63.

¹⁸ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940 in HS2/128.

of Malcolm Munthe's work out of the British legation in Stockholm during the spring of 1941, notwithstanding the diplomatic risks.¹⁹

At the end of April 1941, SOE reaffirmed its short-term aim of carrying out sabotage whilst over the longer-term making preparations for simultaneous rising across Norway that would support a landing by an 'Allied expeditionary force'. Moreover, and for the first time, it also stated that if the short-term policy resulted in the 'locking up' of German divisions in Norway, this would be 'desirable' from a 'strategic point of view'. In other words there was a clear understanding that attacks against economic and military targets could have an important additional benefit. Tying down large numbers of enemy forces in this theatre was, therefore, not simply a consequence but from a very early stage an important and deliberate element of its policy, although it does not appear that SOE was ever aware of the possible implication of this. Even though actions that forced the enemy to retain sizeable troops numbers in Norway were valuable, this also meant that a landing in a country ideally suited for defensive operations was made considerably more difficult and thereby less likely. Over the next three years, therefore, there remained a conflict at the heart of SOE's policy between its short and long-term objectives, although this does not seem to have had any influence on its development. It was wider strategic factors that would shape future plans, not internal inconsistencies.²⁰

In the spring of 1941, British military fortunes reached a low point with the disasters in Greece, Crete, and North Africa, which reinforced the belief that British land forces were still not ready to take on the bulk of the German army.²¹ A further complicating factor was the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. It was within this difficult and shifting context that during the spring and summer of 1941 SOE began to examine its future programme including an assessment of its requirements, in aircraft and equipment, for arming secret armies and sabotage groups across occupied Europe.²² This was done in consultation with the British planning

¹⁹ Gladwyn Jebb wrote that in Norway 'a workable machine has already been built up by us with the help of the Norwegian government'. PRO: letter from Gladwyn Jebb to Major General Sir H. L. Ismay, ref. SC/1728/82, 19 February 1941 in HS8/272. See also chapter one, p. 40.

²⁰ I have found nothing in this or in future documents to show that SOE was aware of this inconsistency. PRO: paper entitled, 'The Prospects of Subversion: A Country by Country Analysis', 21 April 1941, in HS8/272.

²¹ Note from Churchill to Eden, 3 April 1941, in CAB69/2, cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 120.

²² PRO: 'A Study of Requirements for the Organisation of Insurrection in German-Occupied territories', 21 May 1941, by Colin McV. Gubbins. 'Comments on M's Paper', note from Col. A. M.

staff, who also reviewed the contribution of subversive and irregular operations to strategy.²³ This led to important changes.²⁴ The defence of the UK remained the immediate priority, and there was no change in the conviction that German military strength had to be undermined through indirect means before Britain could again undertake a major land offensive on the Continent. The priority was, however, to use Bomber Command to 'break the back of the Germans', although this would be supported by acts of sabotage.²⁵ Significantly for SOE, this meant that in the immediate future it was recommended by the British planning staff that sabotage and subversive activities should be given preference over the longer-term aim of preparing and organising secret armies, which by mid August had been scaled back. There was a realisation that arming resistance groups across Europe would require huge resources from Bomber Command, thereby threatening its contribution. This and the entry of the Soviet Union into the war, which meant that eastern Europe became a Soviet sphere of influence, also led to a decision to concentrate SOE's long term effort in northwest Europe, specifically Holland, Belgium, and France, from where a final land offensive against Germany would probably commence. The first step for SOE would be to send organisers with wireless transmitters to these countries to establish 'patriot forces' prior to supplying arms and equipment.

Norway was not, however, immediately sidelined for three important reasons. It was seen as an area for possible future 'subsidiary' operations, considerable progress had been made in organising a secret army and this should not be wasted, and finally, because of the Shetlands Base it was believed that this clandestine army could be supplied by sea and was not dependent on airdrops.²⁶ Consequently, the long-term objective of organising a secret army in Norway could continue despite the country's geographical and strategically marginal position. The reference to the

Anstruther to AD/Z, ref. L/PP/94, 6 June 1941. 'SO2 Programme', paper by Colonel A. M. Anstruther, 9 June 1941, all in HS8/272. COS (41) 147 (0), memo from Hugh Dalton to Winston Churchill entitled 'Outline Plan of SO2 Operations', in CAB 80/58.

²³ COS minutes, 12 March 1941 in CAB 79/9, JPS minutes, 15 March 1941, in CAB84/3, COS (41) 115 (0), 22 June 1941, in CAB 80/58, all cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 140-143. See also: JP (41) 444, 13 June 1941, in Cab 79/12 and JP (41) 649, 'Special Operations Executive', 9 August 1941, in CAB 79/13, cited in Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 59-65.

²⁴ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 58-68, and Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 140-157.

²⁵ COS (41) 115 (0), 22 June 1941 in CAB 80/58, cited in Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 141-143.

²⁶ PRO: JP (41) 649, 'Special Operations Executive', 9 August 1941, in CAB 79/13, cited in Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 59-65. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 64-66.

suitability of Norway for 'subsidiary' operations was probably the result of the considerable attention that was paid to this theatre at the time within both military and political circles. During the spring of 1941, certain senior SOE staff officers began to take a special interest in Norway and saw it as a possible location for operations by regular forces, which could be supported by local resistance groups.²⁷ Around this time, even before the German invasion of the Soviet Union, the British planning staff also began to examine the possibilities of landings in both the south and north of the country.²⁸ One important influence behind this was probably the Prime Minister's preoccupation with Norway that had returned in September 1940, only four months after the failed Norwegian campaign, when he commissioned a report on climatic conditions south of Bergen.²⁹ From the summer of 1941 there were also calls for a Second Front to support the Soviet Union, which Churchill used to sustain interest in the country. This all culminated in October 1941 in Operation Ajax, a plan to establish a bridgehead in Norway through a landing at Trondheim. There was considerable high-level SOE involvement in several of these studies, especially 'Ajax' where it was at one stage proposed that resistance groups should be used to support operations by regular forces. The organisation was therefore fully aware of the considerable and widespread attention that was being given to this theatre.³⁰ Nevertheless, despite pressure from the Prime Minister, a landing in Norway was eventually resisted by the COS for both strong operational and strategic reasons. His

²⁷ Col. A. M. Anstruther believed Norway was the best area where SOE could assist an operation by a British Corp. On 29 May 1941, Harry Sporborg had a meeting with the Future Operations Planning Section (FOPS) to discuss 'a general assault to retake Norway'. He met with significant scepticism. PRO: memo from L (Col. A.M. Anstruther), to AD/Z, ref. L/PP/43, 2 April 1941, and memo from S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to AD/A (Charles Hambro), 30 May 1941, both in HS8/272.

²⁸ Operation Dynamite was a plan to land forces at Stavanger to establish a bridgehead in Norway. According to Olav Riste this study began before the German invasion of the Soviet Union. PRO: JP (41) 388, 'Operation Dynamite', 19 May 1941, in CAB121/443. FO *arkiv boks* 196, *Kassett 'Stabssjefens safe, mappe Nord-Norge'*, 'Staff Study on the establishment of our forces in Northern Norway', 1 July 1941, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 132-133.

²⁹ PRO: memo from Churchill to the Joint Planning Staff (JPS), 21 September 1941 in PREM 3/328/6 asking them to prepare a small 'account of the climate of southern Norway south of Bergen'. Its report, JP (40) 515, dated 4 October also in PREM 3/328/6 refers to the suitability of the 'climate for operations in southern Norway during March and April'. Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) from December 1941 wrote that from October 1941 onwards 'we [COS] were to be continually in trouble riding him [Churchill] off mad plans to go back to Norway'. Danchev & Todman, *War Diaries 1939-1945*, p. 187. See also: Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I. P. 107.

³⁰ Hugh Dalton was directly involved in the preparations for 'Ajax' and it was also envisaged that SOE would take part in 'Dynamite' if undertaken. See: PRO: JP (41) 609, 'A Campaign in Norway', 30 July 1941; JP (41) 735, 'Operations in the North', 9 September 1941; JP (41) 763, 'Operations in Northern Norway', 17 September 1941, all in CAB 121/443. CAB 98/54, 'Operation Ajax', and WO193/805, 'Operation Ajax'. Note ref. D255/1, 12 September 1941, from Churchill for COS Committee, in PREM3/328/11.

trumpeting of action in the north was therefore silenced, at least temporarily, and the ambitious plans for the country were significantly scaled-back leaving only a series of large combined operations against industrial and military targets close to the Norwegian coastline during December 1941. These were more in step with the British strategic aim of wearing down German fighting strength and little more than a sop to calls for a Second Front.³¹ They are, however, symbolically important because they represent the absolute limit of what the COS were militarily prepared to undertake in Norway. From early 1942 and prior to its liberation in 1945 only small-scale amphibious raids, *coup de main* attacks, and subversive operations were carried out in this theatre. Plans for a landing in the country by a British or Allied Expeditionary Force had therefore effectively been abandoned.

The attention paid to Norway was the result of the polemic within the British war management machinery,³² between Churchill on one side, anxious to take the offensive at any opportunity, and the COS's more cautious step by step, measured, and long-term approach to strategy, which won out in the end.³³ Importantly, however, this influenced SOE policy in Norway in two ways during 1941. It created a temporary expectation that there could be a landing in the country before and independently of any final offensive across Europe. In April, in a document entitled 'Scandinavian Policy', the long-term objective was simply to prepare for a rising to support 'a landing by an Allied expeditionary force'.³⁴ But by July, it was envisaged that large-scale military operations could occur in Norway prior to and independent of a landing that was part of the 'opening of a British offensive on the Continent'.³⁵ By November 1941, however, after the rejection of Operation Ajax, and the concept of 'secret armies' exploding into action across Europe had been scaled back, the

³¹ Minutes from COS's meetings show that they strongly resisted Churchill's pressure for a 'Second Front' whether in Norway or elsewhere for strategic and operational reasons. Their cautious approach meant that the use of ground forces was limited to the Middle East and Africa. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 162-179. See also: PRO: COS (41) 237, 8 July 1941, minute from Churchill to COS, in CAB 121/443. For details of these operations see: Appendix E, 'Sea-borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

³² A. Danchev, 'God Knows: Civil Military relations with Allies', in A. Danchev (ed.), *On Specialness: essays in Anglo-American relations*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 54.

³³ A. Danchev, 'Great Britain: The Indirect Approach', in D. Reynolds, W. F. Kimball, A. O. Chubarian, (eds.), *Allies at War: the Soviet, American and British Experience 1939-1945*, (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), p. 8. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 162-179.

³⁴ PRO: 'Scandinavian Policy', 16 April 1940 in HS2/10.

³⁵ PRO: 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway in Reply to their Report dated 10 June 1941 and addressed to HM King Haakon', 17 July 1941 in HS2/231 & 232.

available SOE documents make no mention of a landing in Norway, either as part of a Europe-wide offensive or independently. The long-term policy was to prepare the indigenous resistance to support Allied military operations to re-conquer Norway. In other words to re-assert legitimate control over the country and return it to lawful government: an exclusively political role. It was also not to be used prematurely to support 'insignificant' operations.³⁶ Therefore, by the beginning of 1942, SOE's long-term aim in this theatre had changed. It was no longer to create a secret army that would support a landing by regular forces, one of a series of such landings across Europe that were part of a final and decisive military offensive against Germany. Even before the entry of the USA into the war the role of Norway within British strategy had altered. The country had been marginalised and SOE policy quickly reflected this.

Prime Ministerial interest in Norway during 1941 also had another immediate and disruptive impact on SOE policy. From late 1940 and during the first half of 1941, contrary to previous assertions,³⁷ Churchill attempted to block small raids and subversive actions in the country because he believed they threatened his wish for a landing by British forces.³⁸ This effectively undermined SOE, caused uncertainty, and thereby made future planning problematic. In response and in order to make its case to be allowed to carry out its objectives unhindered, SOE began to make exaggerated claims about what it could achieve. For example, it asserted that both the Norwegian people and government were actively urging an intensification of operations against the Germans in their country. SOE's seemingly hyperbolic statements, which have been seized on by earlier historians, were not a result of over enthusiasm after the success of operations such as 'Claymore', which Churchill had grudgingly agreed to, but part of a internal campaign to be allowed to follow its remit, which the Prime Minister appeared to be stifling.³⁹ By July, however, these

³⁶ PRO: letter from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 28 November 1941 in HS8/237.

³⁷ Stafford, *Churchill & Secret Service*, p. 244.

³⁸ Churchill opposed both Operations Mandible and Claymore. PRO: a note to the Prime Minister from H.L. Ismay, entitled 'Operation Castle', 7 January 1941, in PREM3/328/11A. See also chapter five, p. 151, footnote, 21. For details of these operations see: Appendix E, 'Sea-borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

³⁹ On 10 April 1941 Hugh Dalton drafted a letter to Churchill appealing for guidance on policy in Norway. It shows his frustration that SOE was not allowed to get on with their job. The letter was eventually only sent to Gladwyn Jebb the Chief Executive Officer of SOE. See: PRO: letter from CD, (Sir Frank Nelson) to AD/A (Charles Hambro), copy to CEO (Gladwyn Jebb), ref. CD/NO/306, 25 March 1941 and paper entitled 'Scandinavian Policy', 16 April 1941 in HS2/10. Kjelstadli,

difficulties had passed. Fortunately for SOE, the Prime Minister's opposition was only temporary, and in searching for ways to support the Soviet Union after the German invasion, his resistance to amphibious raids was abandoned.⁴⁰ Therefore, by the autumn of 1941, SOE was able to pursue its aim of attacking industrial and military targets in Norway without interference.⁴¹ Nevertheless, Churchill's interest in the country had not only been an ongoing concern for the COS but also had been a distracting and complicating factor for SOE in the development of its plans for this theatre during 1941.

From the summer of 1940 until the end of 1941, the development of SOE's policy for Norway closely mirrored the contribution that it was expected clandestine activities and the Norwegian theatre would make to British strategy. By the end of 1941, however, a landing by British forces in Norway, as part of a series of similar landings across Europe, had been abandoned, and despite pressure from the Prime Minister to create a Second Front there was little possibility of any future large-scale operations in this theatre. SOE's policy would quickly reflect these changes. By early 1942, the long-term aim was to prepare a clandestine army in readiness to support operations to liberate the country, something that became increasingly distant as the strategic and operational focal point moved to the Mediterranean and ultimately an invasion of northwest Europe. From this point Norway and SOE's plans for this theatre became progressively subsidiary to Allied strategy as it was played out across Europe and North Africa.

II

SOE Policy in Norway 1942-1943: Subordinate to 'Torch' and 'Overlord'

The US entry into the war in December 1941 changed the strategic picture in Europe, with grand strategy no longer the sole responsibility of Britain, but defined by the British and American coalition. Future American policy was based on the concepts of

Hjemmestyrkene, pp. 62-63. See chapter three, p. 90-91, which shows that the Norwegian government had no clear policy on these issues at this time.

⁴⁰ In early July 1941, Churchill requested that Admiral Keyes, the Director of Combined Operations, be asked to consider a raid in the north of Norway on the scale of 2-4000 men. He also asked about a plan that the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet had put forward for a small raid to destroy economic and military targets in Hammerfest. See: PRO: COS (41) 217, minute from Winston Churchill, 8 July 1941 in CAB 121/ 443.

⁴¹ PRO: 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway in reply to their report dated 10 June 1941 and addressed to HM King Haakon', 17 July 1941 in HS2/231 & 232. Paper entitled 'Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Regarding the Military Organisation', 24 November 1941, in HS2/127.

mass and decisive concentration and built on national optimism and a belief in its industrial might. Consequently, the Americans wanted to ‘concentrate Allied forces as rapidly as possible and seek a decisive clash in the field’.⁴² In contrast the British wished to continue with the policy of reducing Axis military capability before undertaking a final offensive that would complete the defeat of Germany. It was the relationship between these two approaches that shaped the development of Allied strategy during 1942 and 1943. In the short-term it was the British view that prevailed and American calls for a cross-channel operation in 1942 were rejected. After agreeing to a ‘Germany first’ strategy, however,⁴³ it was politically unacceptable for American forces to remain idle in Europe and therefore Operation Torch, the landings in northwest Africa, was eventually agreed.

Allied strategy was hammered out during 1942 and 1943 at a series of conferences involving the British and American general staffs, political leadership, and later Soviet representatives, at locations in North America, North Africa, and the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ The first of these, the ‘Arcadia’ conference, was held in Washington from late December 1941. Although on the way to the USA Churchill resurrected the concept of scattered landings across Europe supported by resistance forces,⁴⁵ at Washington this notion was finally discarded. With the entry of the USA into the war it was no longer necessary to depend on secret armies; they could ‘contribute to the execution of a plan but they were henceforward quite secondary to the making of it’.⁴⁶

Although ‘Arcadia’ largely re-affirmed Britain’s indirect, attritional approach, the Americans did not see it as definitive. Therefore, through the spring and early summer of 1942 they began to press for a landing in France. A series of protracted and complex negotiations followed that eventually led to the decision to go ahead with Operation Torch in November 1942, and to prepare for Operation Roundup, an invasion of northwest Europe in 1943. The British had rejected an early

⁴² Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 273-274. Matloff, ‘Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945’, in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p.685.

⁴³ Matloff, ‘Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945’, in Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 682.

⁴⁴ These were: ‘Arcadia’, in Washington, 22 December 1941-6 January 1942; ‘Symbol’ at Casablanca, 14-24 January 1943; ‘Trident’ in Washington, 12-25 May 1943; ‘Quadrant’ in Quebec, 14-24 August 1943; ‘Sextant’ at Cairo, 22-25 November 1943; ‘Eureka’ at Tehran, 28 November-1 December 1943; ‘Second Cairo’, 3-6 December 1943. Soviet representatives attended the Tehran conference.

⁴⁵ Churchill, ‘The Grand Alliance’, vol. III, in *The Second World War*, pp. 574-585.

⁴⁶ Appendix I, ‘Memorandum by the United States and British Chiefs of Staff (WW I)’, cited in Howard, ‘Grand Strategy’, vol. IV, in Butler, *History of the Second World War*, pp. 597-509. See also: Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 81-82 and Butler, ‘Grand Strategy’, vol. III, part II, in Butler, *History of the Second World War*, p. 518.

‘concentration of force’ until German strength was visibly weakened. More significantly, the consequent decision to land in North Africa, although with American agreement, deflected Allied operations toward the Mediterranean during 1943, away from northwest Europe and Scandinavia.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, in the search for an alternative to a cross-channel operation and owing to the threat to the Arctic convoys posed by the German surface fleet stationed in Norway from early 1942, Churchill’s interest in Scandinavia re-surfaced. In May 1942, this resulted in a plan for a landing in northern Norway, Operation Jupiter. This, however, despite further requests from the Soviet Union for a Second Front and notwithstanding its long life, was consistently opposed by the COS and ultimately rejected. Although protection of the Arctic convoys placed additional demands on the British Home Fleet, the requirements of home defence and the call for resources in the Mediterranean meant that a landing in Norway, even if it could be justified, remained unrealistic.⁴⁸

Norway’s significance was evinced in the series of strategic deception operations that commenced with Operation Hardboiled in early 1942, a notional attack aimed at the coast south of Trondheim. The objective was to alarm the enemy, force him to divert his forces to this theatre away from the main battlefronts, and deceive him as to Allied intentions.⁴⁹ It was followed soon afterwards by Operation Solo, which was authorised in July 1942 and included ‘Solo I’, which by simulating operations against Norway was designed to cover preparations in the UK for Operation Torch.⁵⁰

It was within this context that in May 1942, the COS issued their second directive to SOE, a document that was shaped by Allied proposals for a landing in

⁴⁷ Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 285-333.

⁴⁸ Churchill, ‘The Hinge of Fate’, vol. IV, in *The Second World War*, pp. 303-304. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, pp. 303, 312, 323. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 143-155. Danchev & Todman, *War Diaries 1939-1945*, pp. 261, 263, 281, 321, 333, 338, & 348. Till, ‘Naval Power’, in McInnes & Sheffield, (ed.) *Warfare in the Twentieth Century*, p. 11. Willmott, ‘Operation Jupiter and possible landings in Norway’, in Salmon, (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, p. 102, 105, 106.

⁴⁹ In October 1941, the COS agreed to the establishment of a deception section under a ‘Controller’, Colonel Oliver Stanley. The first proposal for ‘Hardboiled’ was sent to the COS in December 1941. Stavanger was eventually chosen for the main thrust of the operation, which was aimed for April, but to be postponed to May 1942 to extend the threat. See: PRO: NID/00502/42, Operation Hardboiled, 27 January 1942, in ADM223/481. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 217-218.

⁵⁰ Deception planning was now under Lt. Col. John Bevan and the London Controlling Section (LCS). On 27 July 1942, the COS instructed LCS to provide cover for ‘Torch’. The eventual plan had two parts: ‘Passover’, designed to contain forces in Western Europe, and ‘Solo’, including ‘Solo I’, to provide actual cover for ‘Torch’. The notional targets in Norway were Narvik and Trondheim. See:

Western Europe in 1943. Paramilitary organisations in the areas of projected operations would be built up and equipped in readiness to provide support during the initial assault. The only mention of Norway is as a potential theatre for raiding operations during the summer of 1942,⁵¹ which is another indication that by this stage Norway was, despite Churchill's 'mad plans',⁵² ancillary to the main strategic and operational momentum in Europe.

These contextual developments are important because of the impact they had on SOE's policy for Norway during 1942. It meant that the balance between and the importance of the long and short-term objectives, began to change. As Norway became increasingly peripheral to the development of Allied strategy, the timing of operations to secure its eventual re-occupation became unpredictable. Consequently, the long-term objective became wrapped in uncertainty, especially as there was an 'absence of information concerning high policy'.⁵³ Internal SOE documents consistently refer only to an expected 're-conquest' of Norway,⁵⁴ and by June there is frustration and impatience within the Norwegian section over when if ever an invasion of Norway would happen, which made preparation very difficult.⁵⁵ The arming, equipping and organising of a 'secret army' would continue so that it could be used at 'some future time' to be indicated by the 'Chiefs of Staff'.⁵⁶ Previous historians have suggested that Churchill's interest in and pressure to mount 'Jupiter' created an expectation within SOE and the teams it sent into Norway at this time that an invasion was coming, which then spilled over into the local population.⁵⁷ But the available SOE policy documents only appear to emphasise doubt over what might happen, and make no specific mention of any plans to support an imminent landing by

Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 221-224.

⁵¹ PRO: COS (42) 133(0), 'SOE Collaboration in Operations on the Continent', 12 May 1942, in CAB80/62.

⁵² Danchev and Todman, *War Diaries 1939-1945*, p. 187.

⁵³ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations', ref. JSW/658, by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 5 June 1942, in HS2/128.

⁵⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE's Role', by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 6 April 1942 in HS2/218.

⁵⁵ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations', ref. JSW/658, by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 5 June 1942 in HS2/128.

⁵⁶ PRO: letter from H. N. Sporborg, to E. O. Coote, (Foreign Office), ref. F/5357/130/17, 23 September 1942 in FO898/241.

⁵⁷ Grannes, 'Operation Jupiter: a Norwegian perspective', in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 109-118.

Allied forces.⁵⁸ Moreover, during the first half of 1942, the majority of its operations along with arms and equipment went into southern Norway with the objective of organising and preparing guerrilla groups to attack appropriate targets, but only in the ‘event of an Allied landing’ or an invasion somewhere.⁵⁹ It is understandable, however, that the arrival of these teams, whose job was to prepare local groups to assist operations by regular forces, should have raised hopes that an invasion was impending. The long-term objective remained as it had from the previous November, to organise and prepare a secret army that could assist an Allied landing that would lead to the ‘re-conquest of Norway’ and the ‘re-establishment of the Government of H.M. King Haakon VII’.⁶⁰ In Norway, therefore, part of SOE’s role would be purely political, although how and when it would be able to carry out this political task would increasingly depend on strategic and operational developments elsewhere in Europe.

In the meantime the short-term objective would be pressed on with. In August 1942, Brigadier Gubbins, recently appointed as the Deputy Executive Director of SOE with responsibility for operations, approved a document outlining SOE’s policy in Norway for the next six months. It called for *coup de main* operations to be undertaken as often as possible and an increase in ‘incendiarism’ and sabotage that ‘could not be traced back’.⁶¹ By December it was Gubbins’ belief that SOE would be given a part in a future strategy, ‘which will call for much greater sabotage activity in practically all territories’, and therefore SOE ‘may be directed to ease up’ on ‘efforts to organise secret armies’.⁶² Consequently, in the second half of 1942 there were indications from the senior hierarchy of SOE that the priority accorded to short-term objectives such as sabotage in northwest Europe would not only continue but also intensify, particularly in the case of Norway.

During 1943, the Allies focused on the Mediterranean, with operations moving from North Africa through Sicily and into Italy. According to Alan Brooke, the

⁵⁸ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations’, ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942 in HS2/128. In this paper Wilson refers to SOE plans for ‘North Norway’ and a link up with Russian forces, but it is unclear what he is specifically referring to.

⁵⁹ PRO: Operation Instructions for Crow, 1 January 1942, in HS2/152. ‘Lt. B. E. Sjøberg’s Report’, in HS2/148. For details of operations see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway, 1940-1945’, pp. 331-334.

⁶⁰ PRO: paper entitled, ‘The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE’s Role’, 6 April 1942, in HS2/218.

⁶¹ PRO: ‘Present Situation in Norway and Directive as to Future Policy’, from D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. DCDO/1255, 26 August 1942 in HS2/232.

⁶² PRO: memo from D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to CD (Charles Hambro) in HS2/232.

chairman of the COS, the intention was to wear out 'German forces, both land and air' and withdraw strength from Russia. Strategic bombing, economic pressure, and subversive activities would also continue with the aim of 'softening up' Germany in preparation for a final campaign in northwest Europe.⁶³ In the meantime, important preparatory steps were taken toward the implementation of the 'decisive concentration of force' that would complete the defeat of Germany with the 'nature, timing, and priority of the cross-Channel attack', the landings in Normandy, eventually agreed.⁶⁴

During 1943, Churchill also rather predictably returned his attention to Norway as a possible alternative to Overlord.⁶⁵ His views were again rejected, both by the COS and by Lt. General Frederick Morgan, who in the spring of 1943 was appointed Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander (designate) (COSSAC) in preparation for Operation Overlord. Although Morgan was directed to consider a landing in southern Norway, eventually given the title Operation Atlantis, he opposed the exercise for strategic, operational, and administrative reasons and it never reached fruition.⁶⁶ Norway's value continued to be its contribution to the development of Allied operations elsewhere in Europe. The country was again selected as suitable for a strategic deception operation this time called 'Tindall', part of a larger plan to mislead the enemy as to Allied intentions during 1943 and pin down German forces in this theatre by once more creating the expectation of a landing in southern Norway.⁶⁷ Moreover, the damage inflicted on the *Tirpitz* by midget submarines in September, and the sinking of the *Scharnhorst* in December 1943, meant that from early 1944 the Allies were able to take the initiative in Arctic waters, bring the 'German forces based in Norway to battle' and sink U-boats, which would also help to exploit 'German

⁶³ Danchev & Todman, *War Diaries 1939-1945*, p. 348. Appendix III (A), COS (42) 466 (0) Final. 'American-British Strategy in 1943', 31 December 1942 cited in Howard, 'Grand Strategy', vol. IV in Butler, *History of the Second World War*, pp. 602-613.

⁶⁴ Matloff, 'Allied Strategy in Europe 1939-1945', in Paret *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 691-692.

⁶⁵ Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 155-162. Note from Prime Minister to General Ismay, for COS Committee, 18 April 1943, cited in Churchill, 'Hinge of Fate' vol. IV, in *The Second World War*, pp. 847-848.

⁶⁶ PRO: COS (43) 214mtg (0), 13 September 1943, and COS (43) 578 (0), report by COSSAC on preparations for an operation against Norway, 25 September 1943, both cited in CAB 122/1190. Directive to COSSAC, 29 September 1943, signed by W.S. Churchill, cited in CAB 120/656. Paper entitled 'Operation "Atlantis" Directive for Planning', from HQ COSSAC, G-3 (ops) Division, ref. COSSAC/00/17/ops, to AC of S, G-3 in WO219/1861. F. Morgan, *Peace and War: A Soldier's Life*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1961), p. 175.

⁶⁷ In 1943 COSSAC was given the responsibility for planning a deception scheme for 1943 that set out to pin down enemy forces in the west. The result was Operation Cockade, which included Operation Tindall. This was a notional plan to land in southern Norway and thereby help to tie down German forces in this theatre. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 230-234.

fears' that the country would be invaded.⁶⁸ In March 1943, the COS issued their third SOE directive. Followed by a fourth in November 1944 that was largely a repeat of the previous directive, although it was stressed that the Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force (SCAEF) would in future guide special operations in Norway. The emphasis for northwest Europe was on short-term sabotage operations and guerrilla warfare. In Norway efforts would be concentrated on attacks against the transportation of materials through Norwegian waters and important industrial targets, whilst the value of increasing German security commitments in the country, a euphemism for tying down enemy forces, through local guerrilla activities, was also accentuated. No mention was made of preparing a clandestine army.⁶⁹ At this time there was even uncertainty within SOE's Norwegian section as to whether the building of 'secret army units in Norway was either advisable or necessary'. The decision was made, however, to carry on but without 'doing too much in the way of fresh organisation'. When Lt. Colonel J. S. Wilson read SOE's March directive it confirmed to him that no military operations were contemplated for Norway. This, he believed, would continue to handicap the long-term objective of organising resistance groups, as it prolonged uncertainty over the future. Nevertheless, he largely supported an increase in sabotage although he thought that it should only be planned and executed from 'the UK'. He considered that the use of local guerrilla activities against the Norwegian railway network would, however, be more harmful to the local population than to the enemy and therefore unwelcome. And as the instruction was that such actions 'should be studiously avoided before the moment of strike has come', he felt that they should be held in abeyance until the time of an invasion.⁷⁰ Railway sabotage in Norway would, therefore, only be carried out in direct support of military operations either on the Continent or possibly within the country.

It was within this background that in May 1943 SOE produced, for the first time, a separate 'Sabotage Directive' for Norway. This document, in step with SOE's March directive, places the main emphasis on attacks against coastal shipping and

⁶⁸ C. Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely*, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), pp. 729-744. Andrew Lambert, 'Seizing the Initiative: The Arctic Convoys 1944-1945', in N. A. M. Rodgers, (ed.), *Naval Power in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp. 151-152.

⁶⁹ PRO: COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Executive Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB80/68. COS (44) 957 (0), SOE's Fourth Directive, 9 November 1944, in CAB 80/89.

⁷⁰ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', no. 5, 26 February to 13 March 1943 in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8c. PRO: paper entitled 'Chiefs of Staff Directive to SOE for 1943, attached to a note from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) from D/Plans, 30 March 1943, in HS8/330.

mines that supply raw materials to the enemy. Furthermore, it states that the 'organisations' that SOE had established, especially in the 'more populated' areas such as around Oslo, should begin to engage in sabotage activities, provided that this did not prejudice their ability to contribute to an eventual liberation. Therefore, in accordance with the strategic priority conferred on sabotage and in order to widen its impact, SOE's senior staff began to press for local involvement in attacks against enemy targets. The balance within SOE policy had by the spring of 1943 completed its shift in favour of short-term activities.⁷¹

Through 1943 it was the preparations for the final stages of the war in Europe and Norway's contribution to these preparations that dominated the evolution of SOE policy. The priority given to sabotage operations in this theatre was directly linked to the process of intensifying the strain on Germany and thereby creating the conditions that would allow a final and decisive Allied offensive in the West. From the middle of the year, however, the impact that this military offensive might eventually have on conditions within Norway also began to affect SOE's plans. For example, German units could be withdrawn from the country in order to bolster defensive operations elsewhere in Europe. Consequently, it was decided that a clandestine army should be prepared so that it could be used to support not only a landing in Norway, but also to delay the withdrawal of enemy forces to 'meet any Continental Allied landing' if required, or carry out counter-scorch activities as these forces withdrew.⁷² By June 1943, therefore, SOE's Norwegian section were cognisant of and beginning to plan for the impact that Norway's marginal position in relation to Allied operations in Europe might have on the nature of the country's future liberation.

III

SOE Policy in Norway 1944-1945: The Ascendancy of Overlord

During 1943 and early 1944 the approaching invasion of northwest Europe increasingly dominated SOE's plans for Norway. Sabotage and subversive activities

⁷¹ PRO: 'Directive for Future Sabotage Policy in Norway', from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. ADE/20, 31 May 1943 in HS2/233. 'Resume of SOE Activities in Various Theatres of War', (for SOE Council meeting of 29 June 1943), ref. plans/450/670, 25 June 1943, in HS8/199.

⁷² PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44', attached to a memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943 in HS2/218.

remained part of the process of adding to the burden on the German war machine, whilst the preparation of a secret army was widened so that it would be ready to contribute to what might ultimately happen in Norway as a result of Overlord. After the completion of Operation Neptune, the assault phase of Overlord in June 1944, however, SOE policy changed and became directly linked to the progress of Allied operations on both the western and eastern fronts. Therefore, although as SHAEF recognised the liberation of Norway was a purely political issue,⁷³ it remained dependent on strategic and operational developments outside Scandinavia.

When the Allies, including the Soviet Union, met at the Tehran conference in November 1943 the date for the launch of Overlord was pinned down for 1 June 1944.⁷⁴ In the autumn, COSSAC took over operational command of SOE in northwest Europe, including Norway,⁷⁵ and from January 1944, in the final run up to 'Overlord' this control passed to SHAEF, which took over the final preparations for the landings in Normandy.⁷⁶ Therefore, in March 1944 it was SHAEF that issued an 'Operational Directive' to SFHQ, which under the command of SCAEF would be 'the co-ordinating authority' on 'all matters in connection with sabotage and the organisation of resistance groups' in this theatre. According to the directive a 'full-scale invasion of the Continent' was the supreme operation for 1944. Undermining German fighting capability through sabotage and subversion in the short-term, to bring 'the conditions in Europe considered essential to the success of invasion operations' remained the immediate priority, although it should not be allowed to put at risk the long-term aim of 'supporting' the invasion of Western Europe when it came. Preparations for activities that would be undertaken 'in conjunction with the allied forces under conditions of invasion or re-occupation' could therefore continue.⁷⁷

Norway, however, remained marginal and subservient to the main course of Allied strategy and this continued to determine its particular contribution in the war

⁷³ FO arkiv (NHM) Mappe Rankin 'B', rapport om konferanse i Scotco 14.6.44., cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 182.

⁷⁴ Danchev & Todman, *War Diaries 1939-1945*, p. 486, and Stafford, *British and European Resistance*, p. 146. According to Alanbrooke's diary this decision was taken at a meeting of CCS on 30 November 1943. It was later delayed to 6 June.

⁷⁵ Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 236. PRO: COSSAC (43) 58 (Final), 'Proposal for Control of SOE/SO Activities in North-West Europe', 2 October 1943, from F.E. Morgan to COS Committee, cited in WO219/40B.

⁷⁶ PRO: SHAEF/17240/13/Ops (A), 'Operational Directive to SFHQ', 23 March 1943, in WO219/4967.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

against Germany. In the run up to the landings in Normandy it was again allocated a role in ‘inducing the enemy to make faulty strategic dispositions’, as highlighted by the two strategic deception operations targeted at Scandinavia, ‘Fortitude North’ and ‘Graffham’. Both of these were part of Operation Bodyguard, a plan to induce Germany to disperse its forces across Italy, the Balkans, and Scandinavia, and to get the enemy to underestimate the Allied ability to undertake a cross-channel landing until late summer.⁷⁸ The nature and timing of a re-occupation of Norway, therefore, continued to be secondary to and dependent upon the success and progress of Allied operations on the European mainland. Norway, however, could not be militarily or politically ignored, especially whilst some eleven to twelve enemy divisions remained in the country. Consequently, from the summer of 1943, proposals for an eventual re-occupation based on the Rankin plans, had begun to take shape. In addition to Overlord, COSSAC had also been instructed to prepare a plan for ‘a return to the Continent in the event of German disintegration’. Out of this came the Rankin plans, which were submitted to the COS in August 1943. They consisted of Rankin A, a plan for an early invasion of Europe if the enemy became over stretched and significantly weakened, Rankin B, a plan to reoccupy a part of Europe from where the enemy had withdrawn, and Rankin C, a plan to deal with a complete collapse or surrender of Germany.⁷⁹

It is outside the framework of this work to go into the tortuous and complex details of the run up to the liberation, especially as it has been extensively covered before.⁸⁰ It was predominately Rankin C and to a lesser degree B that became the templates for plans to re-occupy all or part of Norway; Rankin A was deemed extremely unlikely and quickly dropped,⁸¹ which meant that the possibility of a landing in Norway, something that SOE had long prepared for, was initially viewed within COSSAC as extremely unlikely. Nonetheless, fears grew within the Norwegian government and eventually the Allies that German forces might attempt a last stand and create a *Festung Norwegen*, a fortress Norway. By early 1945,

⁷⁸ PRO: ‘SOE/SO Directive Fortitude – Deception Plan, extracts from plan “Fortitude”’, (SHAEF [44]), 23 February 1944 in HS2/1. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 234-248. M. Howard, ‘Strategic Deception in the Second World War’, vol. V, in F. H. Hinsley (ed.), *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, (London: HMSO, 1990), pp. 105 –117.

⁷⁹ F. E. Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1950), pp. 115-116.

⁸⁰ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 113-274. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 280-312.

⁸¹ F. E. Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, pp. 89, 112-129. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 150-156, 181-188, 237-247. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 281-366.

therefore, preparations had begun to deal with 'post-capitulation resistance' by an overland advance through Denmark and Sweden, although as the German forces in Norway capitulated unconditionally on 8 May 1945 it was fortunately never required.⁸² Nevertheless, what this complicated background shows is that because of Norway's peripheral position, its eventual liberation remained shrouded in doubt and as a result plagued by a number of difficulties right up until the German surrender, which ultimately had an important impact on SOE's policy for this theatre.

In August 1943, planning and preparation for the liberation was placed under Scottish Command (Scotco), commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Thorne.⁸³ Although plans were made for a Rankin B scenario, a German withdrawal from all or part of Norway, it was the Rankin C plan, which 'dealt with the possibility of a complete collapse of Nazi power on the lines of the swift surrender of November 1918',⁸⁴ that became the basis for Operations Apostle and Doomsday, the final proposals for the re-occupation of the country.⁸⁵ These plans were, however, beset by two major problems from their inception until their implementation in the early days of May 1945. Firstly, there was a lack of available forces and secondly an expectation that even after a German capitulation there would be a significant time delay before any Allied troops could arrive in Norway.⁸⁶

Toward the end of 1943 there were intimations of a change in SOE's policy for Norway. There were signs of a growing reluctance to allow any intensification or widening of activities, particularly sabotage or *coup de main* attacks. In October although SOE received a directive to 'plan for the future interruption of railway communications' to slow down a German withdrawal, it was told not to take 'overt action' unless instructed.⁸⁷ SOE involvement in the strategic deception scheme 'Fortitude North' was also confined to incidental activities that would not result in a reaction from the occupying regime against the local population or resistance forces. Therefore, unlike Denmark, it was decided that sabotage should not be escalated.⁸⁸ The reluctance to permit an increase in open activity is significant because it indicates

⁸² Sir Peter Thorne, 'Andrew Thorne and the Liberation of Norway', in Salmon, (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 209-211.

⁸³ Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, p. 129, & Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 154.

⁸⁴ Morgan, *Overture to Overlord*, p. 116.

⁸⁵ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 150-156, 181-188, 237-247.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 237, 243.

⁸⁷ NHM: paper entitled 'Actions against German Controlled Norwegian State railways' in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/21.

⁸⁸ PRO: 'SOE/SO Directive to the Scandinavian Region', ref. MUS/709/2/411, 1 April 1944 in HS2/1.

that SOE was not prepared to risk any damage to the resistance groups in Norway, particularly as the final stages of the war in Europe approached. There was a growing belief that they would probably be required to undertake an important role in the country's liberation, especially if regular forces were not available.

It was, however, only after the successful completion of the landings in Normandy and the assault phase of Overlord that there was a fundamental and irrevocable shift in SOE policy. Firstly, short-term objectives were modified to meet the needs of ongoing operations on the Continent. From late June 1944 the emphasis on sabotage in Norway moved to toward discarding all targets, 'the products from which are not of immediate value to the enemy',⁸⁹ and by July the general policy was to concentrate efforts on those industries that were of 'present value to the enemy'.⁹⁰ By the summer of 1944, therefore, SOE's short-term focus in Norway had shifted from strategic to tactical operations that were directly supportive of the Allied campaign in Europe.⁹¹

After the successful landings in Normandy, *coup de main* and sabotage operations also no longer had precedence in Norway. From September 1944, until the liberation the following May, the first concern was the long-term objective of preparing and organising a clandestine army. With a shortage of regular forces SHAEF formally accepted that local resistance groups would be needed to play a significant part in the country's eventual liberation, and therefore their preservation, training, arming, and equipment became a priority. In early August when the British 52nd Division, the proposed core of a future re-occupation force, was transferred to the Continent, SOE saw this as confirmation that the possibility of military support for Norway's liberation was extremely remote, and therefore 'as a corollary' its responsibilities increased.⁹² Moreover there was a growing fear of the potential threat posed by the large number of German troops that remained in the country. And SOE and Scotco were agreed that the Norwegian resistance should be prepared to act as

⁸⁹ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', no. 29, June 1944, in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

⁹⁰ PRO: 'Outline plan for joint SOE/SO-FO IV activities in Norway from August 1944', from DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), 31 July 1944 in HS2/235.

⁹¹ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, signed by Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman and memo from Anti-U-boat division, Naval Staff, Admiralty, to NID (Q) (SOE) 25 August 1944 in HS2/234. J. Chr. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1995), pp. 184-187.

⁹² PRO: Note from DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) ref. DS/SN/2548, 1 August 1944 in HS2/235.

both a protective force and a force for law and order in the period immediately after an eventual German surrender or collapse and that this situation required a 'new directive'.⁹³ Post-war considerations therefore became an increasingly important factor in determining policy.

At a crucial meeting of the Anglo Norwegian Collaboration Committee (ANCC) on 17 August that included leading figures from SFHQ and the Norwegian High Command, and which was attended by Jens Chr. Hauge, head of Milorg, the issue of the military contribution of clandestine forces in Norway to a future liberation was discussed. It was decided that an up-to-date set of instructions for the resistance were urgently required and therefore toward the end of the month a draft proposal was submitted to SHAEF.⁹⁴ This was eventually approved and at the beginning of September 1944 a new directive for the 'Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway' was issued under the authority of SFHQ.

This document set out SOE's policy for Norway for the remainder of the war. It confirmed that 'no military offensive operations' were planned for the country, and that therefore there should be no 'overt' action that would require outside support. It was felt that the liberation would probably result from a German surrender, collapse or evacuation, and in these circumstances the primary role of the resistance would be to act as a protective force, preventing the execution of a German scorched earth policy, or as a force for law and order after a German collapse and 'pending the arrival of an Allied relieving force'. Current sabotage should continue and limited action to prevent or hinder an evacuation would also be permitted but only by 'specialist' groups. Consequently, the emphasis during the final months of Norway's occupation as expressed through this document was on preparing the resistance for the liberation, especially for the uncertain and potentially chaotic period immediately after the German authorities and troops in Norway had surrendered or withdrawn from the country, and prior to the eventual arrival of Allied forces. It was a document

⁹³ PRO: paper entitled, 'The Present Situation in Norway' from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/2653, 13 August 1944, with another paper entitled, 'Co-ordination of Resistance Planning and Activities with Projected Military Operations', by Major C.S. Hampton, in HS2/236.

⁹⁴ Norwegian historians based on Hauge's recollections have claimed that SHAEF issued a draft directive to SOE in June 1944 exactly along the lines that this meeting called for. There appears to be no record of a June directive in the SHAEF files at PRO or in SOE files in Oslo. See: PRO: 'Minutes of the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee', 17 August 1944 in HS2/138. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 324-325, and Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, pp. 184-186.

that reflected Norway's position in relation to the strategic priority afforded to the campaign in northwest Europe and the growing importance of post-war factors. It also meant that with the full authority of the Allied High Command behind it, for the first time the objective of organising, arming, and training a clandestine army in Norway could really get underway.⁹⁵ It would, however, no longer be used to support operations by regular forces as part of an opposed landing. As a result of the very different conditions within which it had originated four years earlier, the contribution of a secret guerrilla army had dramatically changed.

The directive also permitted limited action, such as railway sabotage, to prevent or hinder a German evacuation. Although only SOE teams sent into the country would undertake such activities in order that the resistance movement as a whole was not endangered. This element of policy did not, however, remain intact for long. By early October SHAEF had decided to allow German forces to return to the Continent, because the 'smaller number of Germans left in Norway' when they surrender, 'the less will be the commitment' that the Allies will have 'to free the country'.⁹⁶ Operations on the Continent were, therefore, seen as the best way of reducing the difficulties of liberating a country that was occupied by several enemy divisions. Pressure from the Admiralty, however, which wished to intensify attacks against enemy shipping, and SFHQ, which argued that it would be difficult to sustain 'resistance groups in Norway in a state of discipline' if they could not contribute to the offensive against Germany, meant that on 26 October SHAEF partially backed down and agreed that 'a limited number of attacks' could be carried out by 'independent sabotage groups' against suitable targets on the main Norwegian railway routes'.⁹⁷

Despite this amendment to policy, however, the Admiralty, Scotco, and SFHQ kept up the pressure on SHAEF to permit unlimited attacks on the rail network to

⁹⁵ Brigadier E. E. Mockler-Ferryman was in charge of SFHQ, which reported through a special staff branch direct to General Eisenhower. This is the document that Norwegian historians claim was issued as a draft in June 1944. PRO: 'Directive on The Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, signed by E.E. Mockler-Ferryman in HS2/234.

⁹⁶ PRO: telegram from SHAEF G-3 Division to Scottish Command HQ, subject 'Rankin Case B- Norway', ref. SHAEF/17240/4/ Ops (c), 3 October 1944, in WO219/2380. Memo from SHAEF to Scottish Command HQ, 'Rankin Case B- Norway' ref. SHAEF/47240/4/OPA (C), October 1944, in WO219/2381.

⁹⁷ PRO: memo from SFHQ, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to G-3 Division, SHAEF, ref. MUS/2301/1/2036, 18 October 1944 and telegram from SHAEF to Scottish Command, 26 October 1944, ref. SHAEF/17240/4/ops (c) in WO219/2380.

hinder German troop withdrawals. They initially met with opposition, not only because it was feared that any action could result in harsh German counter-measures that would threaten the resistance's eventual ability to undertake its primary role of protection, but also because SHAEF was concerned that if the Norwegian railways were brought to a standstill it might result in widespread famine in Norway, as it had in Holland.⁹⁸ This would require assistance from the Allies that in light of the commitment to Overlord would be extremely difficult if not impossible to meet.

What changed matters was Operation Nordlicht, the retreat of the German 20th Mountain Army from Finland into northern Norway in October 1944, which eventually included an order to transfer six of its divisions out of the country. It was the withdrawal of these experienced and battle hardened forces and their potential threat to Allied operations on the Continent that resulted in a change in policy.⁹⁹ In early December 1944, in response to an internal intelligence report that set out this threat, SHAEF agreed to allow unlimited attacks against the Norwegian rail network in order to impose 'the maximum delay and casualties' on the German divisions that were withdrawing through Norway and to force them to use sea routes where they were vulnerable to British air and naval forces. In line with this it was believed that the destruction of the *Tirpitz* in November 1944 would allow the navy to 'adopt a bolder policy'.¹⁰⁰

Although it was realised that this change in policy could put Milorg at risk, it was decided that success must be ensured on the Continent 'even at the expense of Norway'.¹⁰¹ The priority accorded to operations in northwest Europe therefore predominated and continued to cast a shadow over SOE's plans for Norway until well

⁹⁸ PRO: internal SHAEF communication to AC of S, G-3 Division, 7 November 1944 in WO219/2380. Memo from SHAEF, G-3 Division, to Chief of Staff, Allied Naval Expeditionary Force, ref. GCT/370-5/Ops (C), 8 November 1944 and memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DSG/88, 30 November 1944 in HS2/235.

⁹⁹ On 3 October Hitler approved the withdrawal of German 20th Mountain Army in Finland, around 200,000 men, to the 'Lyngen position' in northern Norway; this was Operation Nordlicht. See: E. F. Ziemke, *The German Northern Theatre of Operations 1940-1945*, (Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1976), pp. 301-302; H. Sandvik, *Frigjøringen av Finnmark 1944-1945*, (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1975), pp. 19-32; P. E. Schramm (eds.), *Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht 1940-1945*, vols. I-IV, (Frankfurt am Main: 1961-1980), vol. IV-2, p. 1332. K. O. Solhjell & F. Traphagen, *Fra krig til fred: fokus på Snåsa og nord-Trøndelag*, (Ål: Boksmia, 2001), pp. 61-62.

¹⁰⁰ A Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) argued that if German movements south were not unimpeded they could result in, at worst, an additional seven divisions arriving at the western front by January 1945. PRO: JIC SHAEF (44) 16 (Revised), 25 November 1944, and telegram from SHAEF Main, signed by Eisenhower, to Scotco G (ops), ref. s-69251, 2 December 1944 in WO219/2381.

¹⁰¹ PRO: Internal SHAEF communication from Chief Plans Section, K.G. McLean, to Chief Ops Section, Col. Alms, ref. GCT 370-49/Plans, 1 December 1944 in WO219/2381.

into 1945. Unlimited attacks on the Norwegian railway network were persisted with until 16 April 1945 when SHAEF decided that the arrival of enemy divisions from Norway could no longer influence the main battle, and therefore were no longer a danger. The priority for the Norwegian resistance from that point was to build up 'in order that it may play an active part in the final liberation of Norway'.¹⁰² All uncertainty ended when the German forces in Norway surrendered unconditionally on 8 May.

Conclusion

SOE's policy, its plan of action and statement of aims for Norway, was articulated through a series of documents and directives produced between 1940 and 1945. The combination of short and long-term objectives, which from the late autumn of 1940 was at the core of this policy, originated from the contribution that it was envisaged sabotage and subversive operations would make to the new forward strategy that Britain put in place in the months after the fall of France. This policy, however, evolved after 1940 and was adapted to meet the changing conditions that occurred as the war against Germany gathered momentum. From the end of 1941 the principal factor in this evolution was Norway's growing subordination to the development and implementation of Allied strategy in Western Europe. It meant that the country was seen as an ideal location for operations that set out to disrupt and slow down the supply of war materials to the enemy. Therefore, from 1942 through to the end of 1943, SOE's priority in Norway would be to carry out *coup de main* attacks against important industrial and military targets. This also created ongoing security problems and fed fears over Allied intentions toward Norway, which together encouraged Germany to retain an unnecessarily high military presence in this peripheral theatre, thereby adding to the strain on its war effort. This meant, however, that there was little likelihood of an Allied landing to liberate part or the whole of the country and therefore SOE's long-term aim of organising a secret army became less significant, although it had to continue in the expectation that one day the country would be liberated. Even after the launch of Operation Overlord, Norway remained subordinate to strategic and operational developments elsewhere, although by this stage the impact

¹⁰² PRO: Memo from SHAEF G-3 Division to ANXF (SHAEF) Air Staff, ref. GCT 370-6 Ops (C), 16 April 1945 in HS2/235.

on SOE's policy was different. Sabotage became tactical and part of the offensive against the German forces in Europe. And whilst all of the available regular forces were deployed on operations on the Continent, for the first time the Allied High Command made it a priority to arm, equip, and prepare local resistance forces, and thereby create a viable secret army in Norway.

There were, however, other factors that also contributed to the development of SOE's policy in this theatre. The first of these, which will be considered in the next chapter, was the nature of its relationship with the Norwegian government in exile.

CHAPTER THREE

SOE AND THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES 1940-1945: CONTROL THROUGH COLLABORATION

Introduction

Through operating in the occupied countries of Europe, SOE inevitably made contact with or worked alongside various political representatives or groupings, such as the governments in exile based in Britain, or became drawn into the internal conflicts that broke out within some of these countries after 1940. Political factors therefore became an additional factor 'governing operations'.¹

Norwegian interests were represented in London from June 1940 by the Norwegian government in exile. Its relationship with SOE and the impact of this association on SOE policy toward Norway will be examined in this chapter. This will show that although this relationship was crucial to SOE's success and tempered some aspects of policy it did not alter its essential structure or break its link to wider strategic developments. The Norwegian government in exile was recognised as the constitutional representative of the Norwegian people, both at home and internationally, and although initially it had to face some unpopularity its legitimacy was never seriously challenged.² From the autumn of 1940, through its new Foreign Minister Trygve Lie, Norway pursued a policy of developing a close and positive affiliation with Britain and became a supportive and active ally. At the same time SOE also set out to establish a working relationship with the Norwegian authorities, which from the of spring 1942 became a formal and structured collaboration through which both parties were able to work together on sabotage and subversive activities in Norway. Most significantly through co-operation SOE was able to secure Allied control over special operations in Norway and ensure that they remained in step with strategic requirements as laid down by the COS, and later SHAEF.

As the first section of this chapter will show from the beginning SOE set out to work with the Norwegian government and its military authorities in London

¹ 'Factors Governing SOE operations', 21 April 1943, COS (43) 212 (0), in CAB80/69, cited in Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 33.

² Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 17-94.

in order to effect its recruitment of the Norwegian volunteers that were required for operations in Norway. It was, however, at this stage a relationship built on individual contacts, subject to the prerequisites of security, and based on a determination that all subversive activities should remain under SOE's control. It was not a relationship that was built on a unique scepticism or mistrust toward the Norwegian authorities: it was co-operation on SOE's terms. This rather one-sided association did not last.

In the autumn of 1941, as will be shown in the second section of this chapter, Milorg was placed under the direct authority of the Norwegian Army High Command. From this point SOE realised that if it wished to retain a measure of control over the organisation and development of a secret army in Norway, it had to take a more collaborative approach in its relations with the Norwegian authorities in London. At the same time the Norwegian government, through its Ministry of Defence, began attempts to improve its contact and therefore influence with the British military authorities and SOE. It also accepted that the realisation of its primary aim, the liberation of Norway, could only be achieved with the support of its allies. Toward the end of 1941, in order to help it accomplish these objectives it therefore instigated a series of internal reforms to its military and defence set up. This resulted in the re-establishment of *Forsvarets Overkommando* (FO), the Norwegian Defence High Command, which for the rest of the war was responsible for co-ordinating both military co-operation with the British and preparations for the eventual liberation.

These developments led to a more structured and balanced relationship between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities, especially after the establishment of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee (ANCC) in February 1942, which was made responsible for overseeing sabotage, subversion and the organisation of a secret army in Norway for the rest of the war. It was a mechanism that served the interests of both parties. It allowed SOE to retain direction over these activities and thereby ensure that they stayed in line with policy and ultimately and most significantly, Allied strategy. It also gave the Norwegian High Command authority over the use of its manpower and resources and some influence over clandestine and subversive operations in Norway, which meant that SOE had to accept some changes to its policy for this theatre, especially its approach to sabotage.

From 1942, as the final section of this chapter will show, relations between SOE and FO developed into a close association. The clearest manifestation of this was the amalgamation in the summer of 1944 of the staffs of SOE's Norwegian section and FO IV, a new department set up within FO the previous December. By this stage the Norwegian military authorities were working in co-operation with SOE and fully accepted that the ultimate authority on special operations lay with the Allied High Command. In addition there was little disagreement over objectives, especially the long-term aim of organising a clandestine army in Norway, which meant that they were able to work together effectively and in harmony.

I

SOE and Norwegian Government in Exile, August 1940-August 1941: The Attempt at Control

A scepticism within SOE toward Norwegians, which remained in place until well into the war, has been cited by previous historians as the reason why the organisation took an initially selective approach in its relations with the Norwegian authorities in London.³ This was not the case. From the summer of 1940 there was a view within SOE that if it failed to communicate with the Norwegian government in exile it might put at risk any future intentions it had for Norway. At the same time, however, according to its Charter it was obliged to keep its activities in step with strategic developments and therefore it needed to retain control over its policy toward and activities within the occupied countries. SOE was also a secret service, not answerable to Parliament, paid out of the 'secret vote', and part of a ministry where many of its employees did not even know of its existence. It was for these reasons that SOE initially confined its contacts with the Norwegian government to those individuals or departments that were expedient.⁴

³ To quote Sverre Kjelstadli: 'The British scepticism towards Norwegians and the Norwegian authorities meant that the leadership within SOE insisted that a military underground movement in Norway had to be built up outside and independent of the Norwegian authorities'. Later historians have also pointed to the British attitude toward Norwegians as a factor that made early relations difficult. See: Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 90. Riste *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 21. Kersaudy, *Vi stoler på England*, p. 66.

⁴ Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 34-35, 44.

Section D had already begun to enlist Norwegian volunteers before their government arrived in Britain.⁵ But after the cruiser *Devonshire* reached Scotland on 10 June 1940, carrying with it the King, Crown Prince and most of the members of the Norwegian government, there was a recognised ‘constitutional authority’ in Britain to represent the interests of the Norwegian people.⁶ This was confirmed at meetings on 27 June and 1 July between Lord Halifax, the British Foreign Minister, and Halvdan Koht the Norwegian Foreign Minister.⁷ From this point it became very difficult for initially Section D and later SOE, when recruiting Norwegians, to ignore the concerns of their government.

There were also practical reasons why SOE had to work with the Norwegian authorities. As early as June 1940, Section D had recognised that the Norwegian government’s help was required to obtain ‘enough Norwegians’ for its ‘work’ in Norway.⁸ By late July, therefore, contact had been made with Halvdan Koht both privately and through the War Office, which eventually led in August to the selection of Martin Linge to work as the liaison officer between the newly established SOE and the Norwegian authorities in London.⁹ This was followed by contact with Birger Ljungberg, the Norwegian Minister of Defence, Major

⁵ The ‘Norwegian Expedition’ undertaken in June 1940 was with one exception, made up of Norwegians, a number of which had been recruited through J. Ingebrigtsen, secretary of the ‘Norwegian Seaman’s Association’ in Britain. See: PRO: paper entitled ‘Norwegian Expedition’, undated, in HS2/241.

⁶ According to Olav Riste, ‘constitutionally, there was little doubt that the King and government, by virtue of the constitution, and constitutional necessity, and with the support of the authority given to it at Elverum on 9 April 1940, was Norway’s only legal government whilst in exile, the country was at war, and the homeland occupied’. The Norwegian government in exile was actually a coalition government made up of ministers from parties other than the traditional Labour party. Not all the ministers arrived in Britain on 10 June. Two were in Stockholm and one in Paris, whilst Halvdan Koht, the Foreign Minister at this time did not arrive in London until 19 June. See: Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 17 & 20.

⁷ V. M. Krosby, *Host to Exiles: The Foreign Office and the Norwegian Government in London 1940-1945*, PhD thesis in Government, (The Faculty of Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science, June 1979), p. 31.

⁸ PRO: paper entitled ‘Suggested Collaboration between Section D and the Norwegian Authorities’, June 1940, and file note, ‘Suggestions from “D”’ (Lawrence Grand), undated but probably June 1940, in HS2/240.

⁹ On 23 July 1940, Koht met Anthony Eden, the British Minister of War, and a general from the War Office. This established contact with the War Office, and one of the topics considered was preparation for a ‘rising against the Germans in Norway’. Following on from this a British officer was appointed to liaise with Koht, who was possibly J.L. Chaworth-Musters. Koht’s contacts with the War Office arise out of his wish to establish an information service that could produce and distribute propaganda in Norway, which was a Foreign Office responsibility. See: PRO: file note, ‘Section D’, 7 August 1940 and memo from D/G Mouse (Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters) to A/D, 17 August 1940 in HS2/240. Paper entitled, ‘Norwegian Project’, 3 November 1940 in HS2/218. H. Koht, *For fred og fridom i krigstid*, (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1957), p. 265. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 198.

General Fleischer, the head of *Hærens Overkommando* (HOK), and Colonel Stenersen at the Norwegian army reception camp at Dumfries in Scotland where the Norwegian forces in Britain were based.¹⁰ SOE considered that these were the key members of the Norwegian government and military authorities, and initiating these contacts, along with the appointment of Linge, was all part of a process that SOE hoped would help facilitate and secure the use of Norwegians for special operations in Norway.¹¹

During the autumn of 1940, there were calls from within SOE for a more intimate relationship with the Norwegian government, as it was believed that it could 'wreck' everything if co-operation was withheld. Nonetheless, Norwegian ministers were not kept fully informed of SOE activities and at this stage had no involvement in the development of policy.¹² This was not, however, down to any unique or particular British mistrust of Norwegians that emerged during the campaign in Norway the previous spring. Both Charles Hambro and Harry Sporborg, the dominant figures in the early development of SOE's Scandinavian section had no involvement in the fighting in Norway and were quick to make contact with members of the Norwegian government. It was also only days after the inception of SOE that contact was made with Halvdan Koht, who had been responsible for Norway's pre-war policy of neutrality, a position that was unlikely to endear him to the British military authorities.¹³ From the beginning, therefore, SOE's approach to the Norwegian government was not based on prejudice, but rather on pragmatism.

Secrecy was also a major issue for SOE. It was the War Cabinet that decided that the activities of this new organisation should not be disclosed in parliament, that it was an 'official secret', and its 'affairs could not be debated'. It is rather ironic, therefore, that details of some of its operations were eventually

¹⁰ PRO: file note on meeting between J. L. Chaworth-Musters and B. Ljungberg, 26 August 1940, in HS2/240. Paper entitled, 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940 in HS2/218.

¹¹ PRO: paper entitled 'Norway', 1 September 1940 in HS2/240.

¹² There were indications that J.L. Chaworth-Musters strongly recommended closer collaboration with the Norwegian authorities and believed that if they were not told of what SOE was planning they could wreck the whole effort. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 7 December 1940 in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: paper entitled, 'Suggested Collaboration between Section D and the Norwegian Authorities', date unknown but probably June 1940, and paper entitled, 'Norway', 1 September 1940 in HS2/240. Paper entitled, 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940 in HS2/128.

¹³ Koht, *For fred og fridom i krigstid*, p. 265.

withheld from the War Cabinet.¹⁴ In these circumstances it is perfectly consistent, particularly in the early stages, that this new organisation restricted its contacts and limited the disclosure of information to those governments it worked with. It also seems harsh to describe SOE as ‘playing on the requirement for security’, especially when at the same time Halvdan Koht was withholding the details of his involvement with the British secret services from his own ministerial colleagues.¹⁵

Furthermore, SOE’s disparaging view of Norwegians as defeatist, ‘ill-disciplined’ and ‘great talkers’, an attitude that remained even after British-Norwegian collaboration had significantly improved,¹⁶ was not uniquely applied to Scandinavians, and therefore is not a satisfactory explanation for SOE’s selective contact with the Norwegian government. It was typical of a ‘certain condescension in foreigners’ that was rife amongst British officers at the time. Within SOE there was also a ‘presumed insecurity and indiscretion’ amongst other nationalities, an attitude that was both ‘universal’ and persistent.¹⁷

SOE confined its contacts to those ministers who were most valuable and appeared most supportive, not only because of security considerations but because it wanted to maintain a close and tight control over its activities in Norway. It had to ensure that when the time came to use any ‘movement’ within the country it could ‘lay it on and lay it off’ at its ‘will’ and not ‘anybody else’s’.¹⁸ Sabotage and the organisation of resistance groups had to be co-ordinated with broader strategic and operational requirements, and therefore kept tightly under its wing. Nevertheless, by the early months of 1941, SOE felt that it had a close

¹⁴ As late as May 1945 the secretary to the Cabinet was still refusing to release details of SOE’s raid on the heavy water plant in Vemork to the War Cabinet. Bridges to Selborne, with a copy to Sporborg, top secret, 3 May 1945, in Selborne papers, 21, cited in Foot, *SOE in the Low Countries*, p. 74.

¹⁵ Olav Riste, ‘Relations between the Norwegian government in exile and the British government’, in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, p. 44. Koht, *For fred og fridom i krigstid*, pp. 265-266.

¹⁶ Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson believed that Norwegians were of a ‘very simple nature’, largely because they had not been engaged in military operations in the past hundred years. This view was expressed even after the ANCC had been set up. See: PRO: paper entitled ‘Norway’, 1 September 1940 in HS2/240. Paper entitled ‘Norway-Future planning’, by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942 in HS2/128. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 21. Kersaudy, *Vi stoler på England 1939-1949*, p. 66.

¹⁷ J. R. Lowell, ‘On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners’, in H. S. Commager, (ed.), *Britain Through American Eyes*, (London: 1974), pp. 426-443, cited in Danchev, ‘Great Britain: The Indirect Strategy’ in D. Reynolds, W. F. Kimball, A. O. Chubarian, (eds.), *Allies at War*, p. 5. Foot, *SOE in the Low Countries*, p. 43.

¹⁸ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Norway’, 1 September 1940, in HS2/240.

relationship with the Norwegian government although one forged on British terms.¹⁹

This one-sided relationship also developed because at the time the Norwegian government, distracted by events at home, lacked coherence and direction, and had no clear policy on clandestine operations in Norway. It also had no executive body to effectively represent its interests with its allies on military matters.²⁰ Although, the Norwegian government was in a strong economic position when it arrived in Britain due to its gold reserves²¹ and its ownership of the fourth largest merchant fleet in the world, which was an important source of income during the war,²² it faced many difficulties. Only twenty to thirty civil servants accompanied it,²³ and it did not have the armed forces to allow it to make any more than a token contribution to the Allied war effort.²⁴ The government's position with the population at home was also weak, especially in light of the failure of its pre-war position of neutrality and a defence policy that meant that it was unprepared for the German invasion.²⁵ The negotiations in the summer of 1940 between the Presidential Board of the Norwegian Storting (parliament) and the German *Reichskommissar* over the establishment of a State Council to take over the running of the country - the *Riksrådforhandlinge* - which resulted in the call from Oslo for King Haakon to abdicate and the government to stand down, indicate both the weakness of the government's position and the serious concerns it had to deal with back home.²⁶ It

¹⁹ Hugh Dalton had been in touch with Trygve Lie, who he described as 'wholly in favour of the war'. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 7 December 1940, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: letter from Hugh Dalton to the Prime Minister, 8 January 1941, in HS8/306.

²⁰ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 113, 154, and vol. II p. 29.

²¹ Olav Riste, 'Utefront', vol. VII in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 50.

²² Notraship, the organisation set up by the Norwegian government to administer the Norwegian marine, controlled more than one thousand vessels with a total tonnage of over four million gross tons, of which 241 vessels were tankers. At the time Nortraship was the largest ship owning company in the world. See: Atle Thowsen, 'Business goes to war: The Norwegian navy in Allied war transport', in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 51-66.

²³ By the end of the war the Norwegian government had 2500 employees in London. Riste, 'Utefront', vol. VII in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 49. Krosby, *Host to Exiles*, p.43.

²⁴ Based on an inspection on 18 June 1940, the Norwegian forces at Dumfries consisted of 3 battalion commanders, 12 company commanders, 50 (approx.) platoon commanders, 400 trained men, and 15 trained wireless operators. PRO: 'Report on the Norwegian Troops at Dumfries by Major C.P.D. Legard M12 d', 20 June 1940, ref. N 5852 in FO371/24838.

²⁵ Article entitled '17 May 1940', by Johan Scharffenberg from the paper *Arbeiderbladet*, (Oslo), published on 10 May 1940, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 22.

²⁶ PRO: letter from M. Colban (Norwegian Ambassador to Britain) to Viscount Halifax, 7 July 1940, including a copy of the address from the Presidential Board of the Storting to the King of

therefore became a priority to make contact, gain a foothold with, and establish some influence over developments on the Home Front so that the government could ultimately be seen to 'represent one nation in the fight to regain its freedom'. This meant, however, that at this stage it was not a priority, even if suitable staff and institutions had been in place, to indulge in developing policy on such matters as subversive or clandestine operations.²⁷

During the first six months of 1941, the relationship between SOE and the Norwegian government continued much as before, based on individual contacts and led by SOE. The interests or concerns of the Norwegian authorities therefore had little influence over the development or implementation of SOE policy. Nevertheless, a significant change in the Norwegian government led to closer political relations with Britain. This was the appointment of Trygve Lie as Foreign Minister in place of Halvdan Koht in November 1940,²⁸ which represented a major step toward an unequivocal pro-Allied Norwegian foreign policy. In May 1941, military co-operation was also formalised and placed on a more practical level when an agreement was signed with the British over the use of the Norwegian forces in Britain. In future they would only be deployed either in the defence of the UK or the re-conquest of Norway and were placed under British operational control.²⁹ Significantly, the view of Trygve Lie within SOE's Scandinavian section was that he was supportive of any activity that harmed the Germans or their war effort.³⁰ The new Norwegian Foreign Minister also maintained his contact with both Charles Hambro and Harry Sporborg,³¹ and his appointment was not only well received within the British Foreign Office, but also by Hugh Dalton.³² The establishment of FD-E also provided a more institutional

Norway, 27 June 1940, and the King's answer dated 3 July 1940, ref. N 5926/213/30 in FO371/24828.

²⁷ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 95 & 154, and Koht, *For fred og fridom i krigstid 1939-1940*, p. 263.

²⁸ On 19 November 1940, after he became isolated within the government, Halvdan Koht was granted three months leave. Lie took over in London and on 27 January 1941, Koht handed in his formal letter of resignation. On 19 February Lie became Norway's Foreign Minister. See: Krosby, *Host to Exiles*, p. 74.

²⁹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, *Bilag* (enclosure) II, pp. 249-258.

³⁰ PRO: enclosure no. 9, 'note from Mr. C. Hambro', 6 January 1941 in HS8/306.

³¹ Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen 1940-1942*, p. 61. PRO: note from L. Collier 17 December 1940, ref. N7471/213/30 in FO371/24828.

³² PRO: note from Cecil Dormer, (British Ambassador to the Norwegian government) 20 November 1940, ref. N7293/213/30, and letter from Cecil Dormer to the Foreign Office 16 December 1940, ref. N7471/213/30 in FO371/24828. Letter from Hugh Dalton to Winston Churchill, 8 January 1941, in HS8/306. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen 1940-1942*, p. 114

avenue of contact between SOE and the Norwegian authorities. This small office, under Captain Finn Nagell, was directly subordinate to the Norwegian Ministry of Defence and responsible, amongst other things, for forming closer links between the Norwegian Foreign and Defence ministries and SOE.³³ SOE had already made contact with Nagell after interviewing him the previous November and thereafter it saw him and his staff as an important source of intelligence on conditions in Norway and more importantly as an additional help, along with Martin Linge, in recruiting a greater number of Norwegian volunteers for operations in Norway.³⁴ The involvement of FD-E, members of the Norwegian naval staff, and Trygve Lie in the preparation of British amphibious raids against herring and cod oil plants in northern Norway during March and April 1941, also helped to cement the view within SOE that it was working closely with the Norwegian government. With their help the British were able to enlist Norwegians, obtain the use of a Royal Norwegian destroyer, gather intelligence, and provide food and clothing for local inhabitants.³⁵

At this early stage, therefore, relations with the Norwegian authorities helped rather than hindered SOE plans for Norway. The relationship was, however, led by SOE and based on selected contacts, although it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise. The Norwegian government still did not have a co-ordinated or clear policy on special operations or the institutions in place to represent its interests with its allies. A remarkable illustration of this is Operation Hemisphere, one of the actions against herring oil production in northern Norway in spring 1941, which alongside SOE and the British Admiralty also included a

³³ *Den norske regjeringens virksomhet under krigen fra 9 april til 22 juni*, vol. IV, forsvarsdepartementet, p. 102.

³⁴ FD-E was originally located in 'Norway House' close to Trafalgar Square, where Linge had an office above Nagell. In March 1941, it consisted of three Norwegians and an office lady. FD-E registered Norwegians that had arrived in Britain. Any person deemed suitable for SOE work had a small 'n' written on their form, which was then passed up to Linge. PRO: 'Interview with Captain Nagell, 21 November 1940, in HS2/238. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', weeks ending 21 December 1940, 21 January and 18 February 1941 in boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 111. Haavardsholm, *Martin Linge-min morfar*, pp. 175, 186, 204-205.

³⁵ It is worthwhile pointing out that Lie later denied any involvement in 'Claymore', although the documentation in SOE and the COHQ files appears to undermine this. PRO: files DEFE2/141, Operation Claymore and HS/224, Operation Claymore. NHM, 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', weeks ending 21 January, 11 & 18 February 1941 in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. 'Øksfjord operation' in SOE archive, boks 44, mappe 40/3/4. For details of these operations see: Appendix E, 'Sea borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian coastline, 1940-1945', pp. 328-333. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen, 1940-1942*, p. 140.

contribution from the Royal Norwegian Navy both in its planning and implementation through the provision of the destroyer 'Mansfield' with crew, along with ten Norwegian marines and one officer. According to Hugh Dalton the operation had the complete agreement of the Norwegian government, but despite the participation of Norwegian forces it was apparently carried out without the knowledge of the Norwegian Defence Minister, Birger Ljungberg.³⁶

It was with the seeming support of key members of the Norwegian government and its armed services that SOE developed and implemented its plans for Norway during the spring and summer of 1941. It was therefore able to pursue its objectives without undue political interference. A further important illustration of this is provided by the arrival in London on 17 February 1941 of John Rognes, a leading member of Milorg. He was called over from Norway by the Norwegian Minister of Defence to deal with matters concerning Milorg and to work under the authority of FD-E.³⁷ It appears, however, that Rognes was quickly commandeered by SOE. It interviewed him a few days after his arrival in the country and the Norwegian authorities eventually gave permission for him to be used as a link, initially based on the Shetlands, between SOE and the headquarters of Milorg in Oslo. For SOE he was seen as a means to bring Milorg under British 'control'.³⁸ It was this determination to control matters that was at the heart of SOE's relations with the Norwegian authorities, although this does not mean that it completely excluded members of the government from important decisions. In June 1941 the military council of Milorg (*Rådet*) sent a report to Britain addressed to the Norwegian King. This report, outlining its views on issues concerning its role in occupied Norway, did not, however, go directly to the Norwegian government but instead via John Rognes was handed to SOE, which through Harry Sporborg quickly drafted a reply. This alone represents the degree

³⁶ Trygve Lie later claimed that at a government meeting on 22 April 1941, Captain Ullstrup, who was in command of the expedition, presented a report on the raid. Birger Ljungberg, the Norwegian Defence Minister, however, knew nothing of the operation, which 'severely weakened his position in government'. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen, 1940-1942*, p. 140.

³⁷ Rognes left Norway on 4 February and crossed to the Shetlands, eventually arriving in London on 17 February. He met Ljungberg on 18 February, and was given the task of working on issues regarding Milorg under the authority of FD-E. John Rognes' account to the *undersøkelskommisjon*, 24 January 1947, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, note 24, p. 377.

³⁸ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 25 February 1941 in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: notes headed 'report on interview with SS (Rognes) on 19 February 1941', 'interview with SS, S1 (Frank Stagg) and S3 (J.L. Chaworth-Musters) 24 February 1941, and memo from SA (A.A. Flygt) to A/DA (Charles Hambro), 5 March 1941 in HS2/228.

of influence that SOE exercised over clandestine activities in Norway at this time. Nevertheless, SOE's reply, which it rather suitably called a 'Directive' was, before being sent, placed before both Trygve Lie and General Fleischer. Lie, comforted by the presence of Rognes and Nagell at his meeting with SOE when the document was discussed, and under the apparent impression it would be placed before the Norwegian Prime Minister if that had not already been done, did not object to it being his government's answer. Fleischer's view was that the document gave 'precise and clear instructions'.³⁹ Consequently, SOE's 'Directive' to Milorg in July 1941, which was an important statement of its policy, was placed before important figures within the Norwegian government and military authorities, although not the government as a whole. Their uncoordinated and rather haphazard response was, however, perhaps indicative of the inability of the Norwegian authorities to effectively handle the issue of subversive activities and the development and use of the military resistance in Norway at this stage. The whole episode was also symbolic of the relationship that the Norwegian government had with SOE during most of 1941 and its lack of influence over the development and implementation of British policy on special operations in Norway. This situation, however, soon began to alter.

II

SOE and Norwegian Authorities 1941-1942: From Control to Collaboration

From the autumn of 1941 the relationship between SOE and the Norwegian government in London progressively changed and ultimately resulted in the government, through its newly appointed military authorities, having a greater involvement in the development, shaping, nature, and implementation of SOE's policy for Norway. SOE also abandoned its previous ascendant position and accepted that collaboration, working together toward a common aim, was the best way to protect Allied interests. This, however, came at a price. Norwegian views and concerns would have to be considered, which led to the tempering of some aspects of policy, although not altering its principal objectives. The relationship

³⁹ PRO: 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway in reply to their report dated 10 June 1941 and addressed to HM King Haakon', 17 July 1941 in HS2/231 & 232. Letter from General Fleischer to AD/S (Harry Sporborg), ref. JNR H 163/41, 19 July 1941 in HS2/231. Lie, *med England i ildlinjen*, 1940-1942, pp. 249-250.

that developed from early 1942 was positive and constructive, serving the interests of both sides, and most importantly it ensured that SOE policy toward Norway remained in step with strategic and operational developments elsewhere in Europe.

The emergence and organisation of military resistance in Norway and the creation of an underground army, represented by Milorg, will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.⁴⁰ Relations between Milorg and its government, however, were crucial to the development of the relationship between SOE and the Norwegian authorities. By the summer of 1941, Milorg had set up an administrative hierarchy centred on Oslo, based on a *Sentralledelsen*, Central Leadership (SL), responsible for its day to day running, which was under the *Råd*, the central council (R), responsible for formulating policy.⁴¹ In June 1941, Milorg in its communication to the King in London expressed concerns over SOE activities in Norway and began to look to the Norwegian government for authority and direction.⁴² The arrival of Jacob Schive and Professor Johan Holst in London in October, two members of its central council, helped accelerate this process. Most significantly by turning to its government for legitimacy, Milorg was rejecting SOE's attempts to control it.

On 28 October 1941, Schive and Holst met Charles Hambro and Malcolm Munthe, and on 12 November Schive wrote to Lt. Col. Harry Sporborg with his summary of the meeting. He called for a 'co-ordinating element' to bring together the British and Norwegian governments along with Milorg, which he declared was responsible to the Norwegian government and would only consult with the British through them.⁴³ Just over a week later on 20 November, Milorg was officially recognised by its government and placed under the control of HOK in London. That same day Charles Hambro met Trygve Lie and was told of the change, which according to Lie he fully supported.⁴⁴ Consequently, if SOE was to retain any future influence over the 'official' military resistance, the potential

⁴⁰ See chapter four, pp. 121-123.

⁴¹ A. Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943: Fremvekst, Ledelse og Organisasjon*, (Oslo: NHM, 1991), pp. 10-15. Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse*, pp. 213-227.

⁴² PRO: 'Report to the King from the Military Council in Norway, 10 June 1941' in HS2/231.

⁴³ PRO: Letter from Captain Schive to AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg), 12 November 1941 in HS2/127.

⁴⁴ Lie, *med England i ildlinjen 1940-1942*, p. 251.

core of a clandestine army in Norway, it would be have to be through the Norwegian authorities not independently.

From this point, therefore, SOE changed its approach toward the Norwegian government and suggested a more equitable and structured relationship. On 25 November 1941, Charles Hambro sent a proposal, written by Sporborg, to the newly appointed Norwegian Minister of Defence, Oscar Torp, suggesting ways to ensure greater Anglo-Norwegian collaboration. This document was a watershed in SOE-Norwegian relations. In light of the 'official' incorporation of Milorg, Hambro realised that it was time to define more precisely the basis for subversive operations in Norway. Whilst accepting the wishes of Milorg to be guided by its own government, the paper stresses that any mechanism put in place to enable collaboration must guarantee that the work in Norway is kept in step with 'general policy' as applied across occupied Europe. Behind Hambro's apparent magnanimity, therefore, was a British determination that all sabotage and subversive activity should ultimately remain under Allied direction. The mechanism put forward, an Anglo-Norwegian Committee, borrowed from Jacob Schive, to oversee special operations in Norway was accordingly a pragmatic means that aimed to ensure this objective. Collaboration with the Norwegian authorities would allow SOE to retain influence over both the use of Milorg and the employment of Norwegian recruits. In return the Norwegian authorities would have a say in the implementation of SOE policy in Norway, whilst retaining their authority over Milorg and regaining control over the employment of Norwegian recruits on operations on behalf of the British. It was a proposal that suited both parties, and reflected a realisation by SOE that the British could 'not get on without the work of Norwegians in Norway'.⁴⁵

At the same time, through the relationship that developed between Charles Hambro and Oscar Torp, the Norwegian government began a determined effort to ensure greater involvement in and influence over Allied plans for Norway, especially those concerning an eventual re-conquest of the country.⁴⁶ It was no

⁴⁵ PRO: letter from D/CD (Charles Hambro) to Oscar Torp, ref. CH/88, 25 November 1941, including paper entitled 'Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration regarding the Military Organisation in Norway', in HS2/127.

⁴⁶ Between late November 1941 and the end of January 1942, there was ongoing correspondence between Oscar Torp, Charles Hambro, Major General Sir H. L. Ismay, Secretary to the COS, and Anthony Eden regarding the setting up of a Anglo-Norwegian Planning Committee to co-operate on preparations for a future re-conquest of Norway. This committee was eventually approved by

longer prepared to stay outside the planning and decision making processes when it concerned operations on Norwegian territory. This coincided with growing fears within SOE that it might lose the co-operation of the Norwegian authorities 'in facilitating the use of Norwegian specialists', something that was considered a 'very serious matter'.⁴⁷ Events at the end of 1941 threatened to lead to this scenario.

Despite the wishes of the British Foreign Office, the Norwegian government was not advised beforehand of the two British amphibious raids, Operations Anklet and Archery, which included large SOE-Norwegian contingents and in the case of 'Anklet' the assistance of the Norwegian navy.⁴⁸ These operations also went against an agreement reached between Trygve Lie and Charles Hambro in October 1941, resulted in severe reprisals against the Norwegian civilian population, and led to sharp recriminations between the British and Norwegian contingents on the raids, all of which the Norwegian government could not ignore.⁴⁹ In light of this on 14 January 1942, at a meeting involving Harry Sporborg, Charles Hambro, Trygve Lie and Oscar Torp, SOE

the COS on 24 January but met only once. For the British at this stage of the war it was nothing more than a 'façade to soothe Norwegian aspirations and susceptibilities'. See: PRO: letter from Charles Hambro to Major-General Sir H. L. Ismay, 30 November 1941, ref. CH/NO/150, and letters from Major-General Sir H. L. Ismay to Anthony Eden, 24 January 1942, and to Oscar Torp, 22 February 1942, in CAB121/452.

⁴⁷ PRO: letter from Charles Hambro to Major General H.L. Ismay, ref. CH/NO/150, 30 November 1940 in HS2/127.

⁴⁸ At a COS meeting, (COS [41] 397th meeting), on 24 November 1941, Commodore Mountbatten, Advisor on Combined Operations, (ACO), mentioned that the Foreign Secretary had raised the question of informing the Norwegian authorities about certain operations planned for the Norwegian coast. The COS opposed this on operational grounds. The Foreign Secretary pressed the issue at the COS meeting of 28 November, (COS [41] 400th meeting, min. 7), but the COS argued that on 'military grounds it was unwise to give out information prior to an operation'. Trygve Lie could be advised, although it should be at the last possible moment. It was 25 December, after the forces had departed, that Lie was informed of the operations by the Foreign Office. For details see: PRO: file CAB 121/452. For details of the operations see: Appendix E, 'Sea borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard, 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

⁴⁹ The agreement between Hambro and Lie of 12 October 1941, which was sent to the COS, limited raids on the Norwegian coast to operations of half a dozen men. The Norwegian authorities were angered because the 'Anklet' force gave the impression that it was to stay for some time, which made the local population keen to help. J. W. Torrance, officer in charge of SOE contingent, was extremely critical of the Norwegians, their lack of discipline and general behaviour. The 'Anklet' raid resulted in what was called the '*Jøssing* list' (*Jøssinger* was the term used by Norwegian Nazis to describe Norwegian patriots). This was a list of potential hostages, one percent of the local population. PRO: letter from Hambro to Lie, ref. DCD/326, 15 December 1941 in HS2/127. Memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. ADS/NO/38, 15 January 1942, and 'Report on Conduct of "Anklet"' by J. W. Torrance, 10 January 1942 in HS2/ 199. FD 1326, LIE-TORP, 17 December 1941 med *bilag*, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 145. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, note 64, p. 361.

was made aware of Norwegian resentment. It realised it had little choice but to accept that its activities in Norway and the use of Norwegian recruits would have to have the approval of a joint committee, which would include Norwegian representatives who were responsible to the Norwegian Minister of Defence. Consequently, on the same day Hambro wrote to Torp confirming the setting up of the ANCC, and agreed that SOE would not 'initiate any expeditions to or against Norway without the knowledge or consent of the Norwegian members of this Committee'. Within SOE there was an acceptance that failure to implement this new mechanism quickly could mean that 'the Norwegians would simply refuse to participate in future operations'.⁵⁰ In order to continue to exercise control and retain influence over future clandestine and subversive activities in Norway, SOE therefore felt that it had little alternative but to institute closer collaboration with the Norwegian authorities. Another pragmatic decision.

Alongside this there were also further changes within the Norwegian government, particularly the Ministry of Defence, which led to significant structural and policy developments. Although with the arrival of Trygve Lie as Foreign Secretary Norway's pre-war neutrality policy was replaced by an alliance policy built on co-operation with Britain and America,⁵¹ under the stewardship of Birger Ljungberg, defence policy drifted and lacked clarity.⁵² This changed when in November 1941 Oscar Torp replaced Ljungberg.⁵³ From this point onwards Torp initiated a series of reviews to examine the organisation of the Norwegian armed forces, the making of policy, and the primary issue of Norway's liberation.⁵⁴

Out of this emerged important changes that would assist in the advent of closer relations with SOE. The first was the re-establishment of *Forsvarets*

⁵⁰ PRO: letter from Charles Hambro to Oscar Torp, ref. CH/660, 14 January 1942 in HS2/127. Letter from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. ADS/NO/38, 15 January 1942 in HS2/199.

⁵¹ Lie, *med England i ildlinjen 1940-1942*, pp. 114, 118-119.

⁵² Nygaardsvold, the Norwegian Prime Minister during the war, later described Ljungberg as 'not the right one to carry out a radical re-organisation'. See: J. Nygaardsvold, *Norge i krig-London 1940-1945*, (Oslo: Tiden Norsk Forlag, 1983), p. 92. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 156.

⁵³ The British had been prepared for the arrival of Torp who was described by Laurence Collier as 'the most competent member of the Cabinet next to Mr Lie himself'. Torp took over officially on 18 November 1941. See: FD 13-H, Torp-H.M. Kongen 20.3.42, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 164. PRO: letter from L. Collier, British Ambassador to Norway, to Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary, 10 November 1943, ref. N6524/87/30, in FO371/29422.

⁵⁴ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 156-184.

Overkommando, (FO), on 6 February 1942 under Major-General Wilhelm Hansteen, the newly appointed Norwegian Defence-Chief, who became responsible to the Minister of Defence for all three Norwegian fighting services. FO was charged with co-ordinating and organising ‘everything on the Norwegian side as best possible for the liberation of Norway’, including Milorg, and through preparation ensuring ‘the greatest consideration of Norwegian interests and the best possible utilisation of the Norwegian contribution to the process of liberation’.⁵⁵ Secondly, the policy reviews that were undertaken concluded that Norway’s greatest direct military contribution to its liberation would be through the potential manpower reserves within Milorg.⁵⁶ Importantly, this was a view that fitted in well with SOE’s aim of using a clandestine army to assist and support an eventual Allied landing in the country. There was, therefore, a basis for agreement over long-term objectives, which ultimately assisted both parties in their efforts to work together.

The first meeting of the ANCC was held on 16 February 1942 and included representatives from both SOE and FO. Hambro, Sporborg, and later Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins, all senior staff within SOE, were members of the committee at various times, which illustrates the importance that the British attached to this collaborative mechanism.⁵⁷ The ANCC has been described as the basis for trustful co-operation at the highest level,⁵⁸ and an important forum for the co-ordination of Norwegian and British policy on resistance, which ultimately bore rich fruit.⁵⁹ These are both correct and the regular meetings of the committee, initially once every two weeks, later once a month, through to the end

⁵⁵ In March 1942, FO consisted of five departments, which by August 1942 had been extended to six. FO 1 was responsible for administration, FO II, intelligence, FO III, land and air operations, FO IV, sea operations, FO V, information, FO VI signals. There was also a separate department FO-H responsible for relations with the Home Front. See: Riste, *London regjeringa*, pp. 186,188 & p. 266.

⁵⁶ PRO: paper entitled ‘Re-conquest of Norway’ an extract from a survey made by a committee under the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 19 January 1942, in HS2/218. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 165-166. *Regjeringa og hjemmefronten under krigen: akstykker utgitt av stortinget*, (henceforth ROH), document no. 9, pp. 64-68.

⁵⁷ At the first meeting there was Charles Hambro (chairman), Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg, Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, and Frank Stagg in attendance. From the Norwegian High Command there was Leif Tronstad and Thore Boye. Captain John Rognes and Lt. Commander Marstrander joined the committee as representatives soon afterwards. The make up of the committee was to evolve over the next three years. For details of the changes see: PRO: ‘Minutes of ANCC Meetings from 16 February 1942 to 26 April 1945’ in HS2/138.

⁵⁸ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 174.

⁵⁹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 216.

of the war indicate the significance placed on this new machinery as a means to ensuring joint control of subversive operations in Norway.

It was through the forum of the ANCC that FO affirmed its responsibility for the Norwegian volunteers that were sent to Norway on behalf of SOE. From the spring of 1942, therefore, all the recruits in NIC (1) and NNIU were subject to Norwegian military discipline instigated under the authority of the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief. It was also decided that the military bases, such as STS26, although under British 'operational command' would be run with the co-operation of the Norwegian authorities.⁶⁰ It was the ANCC that became the collaborative mechanism that oversaw the administration of these military units and bases. Most significantly, it was also the body that over the next three years supervised sabotage and clandestine activities in Norway, including the organisation of a secret army, with responsibility 'on the one hand to the Norwegian High Command and on the other to the COS'.⁶¹ From the spring of 1942, therefore, largely through the ANCC and the positive relationship that resulted from it, the development of SOE policy and the implementation of subversive operations in Norway became a joint responsibility. SOE was no longer able to pursue its aims in Norway on the basis of the support of one or two key figures within the Norwegian government or military authorities.

Closer co-operation between SOE and the Norwegian authorities was not, however, only administratively based, but also founded on a parity in policy, especially when it concerned long-term aims. Toward the end of 1941, the Norwegian government set up two committees to examine the issues surrounding a future 're-conquest' of Norway.⁶² In January 1942, the second committee produced its report, which was an analysis of the role that the Home Front and the Norwegian forces in Britain might play in an eventual re-conquest.⁶³ An extract

⁶⁰ NHM: reply by J.S. Wilson to a paper by Major Hampton and Major Helle at STS 26, 13 April 1942 in FO IV archive, boks 31, mappe 4-b-1. PRO: minutes from the first to the fifth meetings of the ANCC, 16 February to 24 April 1942, in HS2/138.

⁶¹ PRO: 'Minutes of ANCC Meetings from 16 February 1942 to 26 April 1945' in HS2/138.. NHM: paper entitled 'Principles of Service in Nor.I.C. (I)', (undated) in FOIV archive, mappe 4-A-2.

⁶² The first committee examined Norway's economic and strategic significance in the ongoing war, whilst the second examined the Home Front and the Norwegian military forces in Britain. See: Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 175 & 407 (footnote 7).

⁶³ PRO: 'Re-conquest of Norway: The Norwegian "Home Front" and the Norwegian Army in UK', 26 March 1942, extract from a survey made by a Committee under the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 19 January 1942, in HS2/218.

from this paper and other documents produced soon afterwards, which examined similar issues, were sent to Charles Hambro at the end of March.⁶⁴ They concluded that the co-operation of Milorg would be ‘of such great importance for the re-conquest of Norway that every effort should be made to make its contribution as effective and extensive as possible’. Nevertheless, it was to take up arms ‘only in conjunction with an invasion aiming at a permanent re-conquest of the whole country or a major part of it’.⁶⁵ This was remarkably close to SOE’s view that the future role of a clandestine army would be: ‘to assist Allied military operations designed to lead to the re-conquest of Norway from the Germans’ although it ‘must on no account be called out prematurely or for any insignificant military operation’.⁶⁶ In April, in a ten page reply to the Norwegian surveys, SOE declared that part of its role in preparing for the re-conquest of Norway would be assistance in long-term planning where it concerned ‘the Military organisation in Norway’.⁶⁷ Therefore, although there were still issues to be resolved over the future contribution and role of Milorg, especially in the period prior to a liberation, SOE and the Norwegian military authorities in London had very similar long-term aims.

The Norwegian position on short-term activity in Norway, *coup de main* attacks and local sabotage was not, however, as compatible. Nevertheless, with the formation of FO and through the ANCC, the Norwegian military authorities became directly involved with SOE operations carried out by teams sent from the UK against sites that were of agreed economic or military value to the enemy.⁶⁸ From May 1942, when the first SOE *coup de main* attack against a major industrial target in Norway was undertaken, such operations were overseen by the ANCC, prepared jointly by SOE and FO, used NIC (1) teams consisting of

⁶⁴ PRO: letter from Charles Hambro to General Hansteen, ref. CH/1436, 3 April 1942 in HS2/127. Papers entitled: ‘Training of the Norwegian Land Forces in UK’, 28 February 1942, and ‘Introduction’, 17 February 1942 in HS2/218.

⁶⁵ PRO: ‘Re-conquest of Norway: The Norwegian “Home Front” and the Norwegian Army in UK’, 26 March 1942, in HS2/218.

⁶⁶ PRO: memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 28 November 1941, in HS8/237.

⁶⁷ PRO: paper entitled, ‘The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE’s Role’, 6 April 1942, in HS2/218.

⁶⁸ Minutes from the ANCC meetings show Norwegian involvement in the preparation for SOE’s first *coup de main* operation in Norway - Operation Redshank - an attack against the transportation of pyrites from the Orkla pyrite mine near Trondheim. It was jointly sanctioned on 8 April. See: PRO: minutes of the first, third, and fourth meetings of ANCC, 16 February, 20 March, and 8 April 1942 respectively, in HS2/138

recruits from the Norwegian army transported from the UK primarily on Norwegian fishing boats, and had the authority of the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief behind them.⁶⁹ FO also made available Norwegian expertise through staff such as Professor Leif Tronstad and Lt. Jan Reimers, who had important technical and local knowledge. SOE chose many of its objectives in Norway from an industrial target list that was created with the help of FO and the MEW.⁷⁰ If it was believed, however, that these operations were more damaging to Norwegian interests than the German war effort the Norwegian authorities would not hesitate to object,⁷¹ and as a result some of them were scaled back.⁷² Nonetheless, over the following two and half years through its military authorities the Norwegian government actively assisted and thereby indirectly gave approval to *coup de main* operations in Norway. This is not to say that all ministers were aware beforehand of each operation, for security reasons alone that would have been unacceptable and unnecessary. The government had specifically created FO to represent Norwegian interests with its allies on military matters, including subversive activities, and this it did both effectively and within a climate of co-operation.

There was, however, a twin-track approach to the implementation of sabotage in Norway. Although specialist teams from outside would undertake planned *coup de main* attacks against the most important economic targets, it was also intended that there would be an ongoing campaign of small-scale ‘unobtrusive’ sabotage undertaken by groups or individuals within Norway.⁷³ One of SOE’s objective was to set up within the occupied countries ‘a system for the development of active sabotage’, organised from and in touch with Britain, but

⁶⁹ According to Harry Sporborg all operational orders were submitted to the Norwegians for counter-signature and according to Lt. Col. Wilson, General Hansteen approved all suggestions put to him for *coup de main* operations. See: PRO: letter from Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg to E. O. Coote, (Foreign Office), ref. F/5357/130/17, 23 September 1942 in FO898/241. Memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S Wilson) to 8627 (E. Nielsen) in Stockholm, ref. N.16, 23 January 1944.

⁷⁰ The list contains forty-one targets in Norway, headed by the Knaben molybdenum mine in southern Norway. Next to each target in columns headed ‘Norge FO’, ‘MEW’, and ‘SOE’ is either a yes to confirm whether each party has agreed each target. PRO: Note from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to L (Col. A. M. Anstruther), copy to Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg, ref. SN/1016, and including list of industrial targets for Norway in HS2/129.

⁷¹ PRO: letter from MEW to A.H.B. Schofield at the British Foreign Office, 8 January 1942, in FO371/32827. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 47-48.

⁷² For example see details on Operation Clairvoyant in Appendix D, ‘SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944’, p. 323.

⁷³ PRO: paper entitled ‘Norwegian Policy’, 11 December 1940, in HS2/128.

using the local population to carry out attacks against identified targets.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, in autumn 1941, when relations with the Norwegian authorities were at a critical stage, and in recognition of the ‘mixed feelings’ and ‘misgivings’ within the Norwegian government owing to its concerns over reprisals against the local population and potential damage to Milorg, SOE decided to sideline ‘immediate’ and local sabotage. For the time being, only prepared and trained teams sent in from outside, under the authority of a joint committee, would undertake planned attacks against important strategic targets in Norway.⁷⁵ It is important to emphasise, therefore, that in contrast to previous assertions,⁷⁶ SOE put to one side its plans to organise a separate sabotage organisation inside the country. Collaboration came at a cost and as a consequence policy was modified. But this was a relatively small price to pay in order to obtain the support and co-operation that was critical for the successful implementation of its plans for Norway.

III

SOE and Norwegian Authorities 1943-1945: From Collaboration to Partnership

This concluding section will examine the relationship between SOE and Norwegian authorities during the final two and half years of the war and show that the collaboration that developed during 1942 deepened until both parties were by the autumn of 1944 working in a close organisational and administrative partnership. Between 1942 and 1945, FO also became an increasingly multifaceted organisation, which led to both advances in its policy on subversive activities, and in its relationship to SOE. Moreover, its positive approach to collaboration helped to facilitate the significant increase in sabotage and subversive in Norway during the final year of its occupation and was critical in

⁷⁴ PRO: memo from M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to A/DZ, ref. M/OR258, accompanied by paper entitled, ‘Notes on the Organisation of a Sabotage System’, 11 April 1941 in HS8/272.

⁷⁵ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration regarding the Military Organisation in Norway’, by Lt. Col. H.N. Spørborg, 24 November 1941 in HS2/127. Memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Spørborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 28 November 1941, in HS8/237.

⁷⁶ Olav Riste argues that SOE had a short-term ‘action’ policy for Norway and a long-term ‘preparation’ policy. The long-term responsibility of preparing a secret army was eventually passed to Milorg. Meanwhile, SOE continued with its own organisation that could undertake sabotage in Norway in the period prior to a re-occupation. According to Riste, SOE held to this policy throughout 1942. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 27.

organising the important role that was delegated to Milorg during the liberation. Ultimately, therefore, SOE's plans for Norway benefited from its partnership with the Norwegian authorities.

Before examining relations between SOE and Norwegian authorities in London during the final years of the war, it is important to consider briefly the relationship that developed between them in Stockholm, from where a considerable proportion of special operations in Norway were instigated. This will show that owing to the remoteness from London, which made control more difficult, and lacking a mechanism through which collaboration could be formally conducted, contact only operated at a personal level. It was therefore regularly subject to local difficulties between certain individuals. Nevertheless, whilst SOE and FO worked together closely and made joint decisions on subversive activities in Norway, the problematic relationship in Stockholm had little if any impact on the development of policy or the implementation of operations.

The SOE Mission that was set up at the British Legation in Stockholm in the autumn of 1940 was important. It was only a train or car journey from the border, which made contact and communication with Norway easier. It therefore became an additional route through which SOE attempted to exercise direct control over resistance organisations in the country. Operations were often instigated or concluded in Stockholm, and it was a point from which couriers could be sent across the frontier to deliver materials and retrieve intelligence. The Norwegian authorities also opened a Military Office in the Norwegian Legation under their Military Attaché. It also used couriers to communicate with groups in Norway, made contact with Milorg, and collected intelligence. It remained *in situ* until the spring of 1943 when it was reformed along the lines of FO in London. From then on communication with Milorg and co-operation with SOE became the responsibility of a new department, *Militærkontoret IV* (MI IV).⁷⁷ Through the

⁷⁷ The first Military Attaché was Oscar Strugstad, followed in March 1941 by A. R. Roscher-Lund and in the autumn of 1941 by Ingvald Smith-Kielland. From spring 1941, Paal Frisvold became the contact with Milorg, whilst Ornulf Dahl concentrated on intelligence. In the summer of 1942, Lasse Heyerdahl-Larsen replaced Frisvold. In the spring of 1943 Colonel Ole Berg became Military Attaché, and the Military Office was re-organised with MI IV placed under Lasse Heyerdahl-Larsen, and MI II under Ornulf Dahl. At the end of 1943 Axel Baumann replaced Heyerdahl-Larsen, until the spring of 1945 when Lieutenant-Colonel Arnold Rørholt replaced him. See: T. A. Barstad, 'Norsk motstand fra Svensk grunn', in S. Ekman & O. K. Grimnes, (eds.), *Brøderfolk i ufredstid – Norsk forbindelser under annen verdenskrig*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1991), p. 228-261. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, note 16, p. 425.

war, therefore, SOE and Norwegian authorities both had offices in Stockholm that undertook similar activities.

The relationship between the SOE Mission and the Military Office at the Norwegian Legation never replicated the formal and organised collaboration that developed in London. During the period from the autumn of 1940 to the summer of 1941, Malcolm Munthe ran his own show and was extremely sceptical of the staff at the Norwegian Legation.⁷⁸ The Norwegian representatives also expressed their disquiet with the extent and nature of the subversive activities that were being carried out in Norway.⁷⁹ There appears to be no evidence of an effort or even an inclination from either SOE or Norwegian authorities to co-operate or co-ordinate their work at this time. Furthermore, from the late spring of 1941, exactly as in London and using individual contacts, SOE set out to assert direct influence over resistance groups in Norway. When it was recommended to the Norwegian government that Paal Frisvold, the Milorg pioneer who fled to Stockholm in late March 1941, should be appointed to liaise with Milorg's leadership in Oslo, SOE attempted to bring him under its wing, very much as it had with John Rognes in London.⁸⁰

Therefore, and despite co-operation between Frisvold and Hugh Marks being described as 'splendid',⁸¹ by December 1941 it was felt that the relationship in Stockholm should be placed on a structured footing. Consequently, Daniel Ring, yet another Milorg veteran, was sent to Sweden to liaise between the Norwegian Legation and SOE Mission in the recruitment of agents, establishment of contacts in Norway, choice of routes for agents, provision of equipment,

⁷⁸ Munthe describes the staff at the Norwegian Legation as 'uninspired, nervous of reprisals and lacking in initiative'. PRO: Note from MM (Malcolm Munthe) to S1 (Frank Stagg), undated in HS2/231. Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, pp. 120-152.

⁷⁹ Munthe was advised that the Legation had complained through the government in London that there were a large number of organisations working in Norway on sabotage. SOE was puzzled by this complaint, as they were not aware of any other organisations, other than themselves, carrying out sabotage. PRO: Letter to 4301 (Munthe) from SOE HQ, 17 April 1941 in HS2/231.

⁸⁰ Daniel Ring, another member of Milorg who had been called over to London in April, was sent to Stockholm in late spring to improve communication with Milorg through the Legation. He recommended in letters sent to Ljungberg and Rognes on 12 June that Frisvold be made the official link with Milorg. See: PRO: telegram for 4301 (Munthe) from SO2, 21 April 1941, telegram from 4301 (Munthe), 1 May 1941, letters from Daniel Ring in Stockholm to Colonel Ljungberg and John Rognes, 12 June 1941, note from S1 (Frank Stagg) to Sa (A. A. Flygt) undated in HS2/228. Note from AD/S (Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg) to SS (John Rognes), 8 August 1941 in HS2/231.

⁸¹ PRO: letter from Frisvold to Rognes, 8 September 1941 in HS2/228.

necessary papers, and money.⁸² Although this was an attempt to improve relations it was still based on individual contacts and appears to have had limited success. Consequently, despite the formation of the ANCC leading to formalised collaboration in London, relations in Stockholm remained difficult.⁸³ Edgar Nielsen, visited SOE HQ in the autumn of 1942 and returned to Stockholm apparently with a determination to achieve the same unity ‘of purpose’ as in London.⁸⁴ Attempts were also made to impose a more structured relationship when in November 1942 General Hansteen issued an instruction that agents arriving in Stockholm were the responsibility of SOE, should report to the British Legation before the Norwegian Legation, and that there should be ‘the best possible co-operation with the British’.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, by early March 1943, FO felt that there was an urgent need for a joint British-Norwegian organisation, a branch of the ANCC, to oversee SOE and FO activities out of Stockholm, although unfortunately it appears nothing came of this suggestion.⁸⁶

Despite the setting up of MI IV under Lasse Heyerdahl-Larsen, which was made responsible for working with SOE Mission, and a joint SOE and Norwegian decision to replace Daniel Ring with Sverre Ellingsen, who would liaise between the two parties in Stockholm, relations remained troubled.⁸⁷ During 1943 and into 1944, Edgar Nielsen continued to complain about the nature of co-operation in Stockholm. Perhaps more significantly, because it indicated a personal prejudice,

⁸² PRO: memo from Sa (A. A. Flygt) to AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg), 10 December 1942. NHM: Kja, Boks 14mp, “*Stockholmsmøtet*” – Instructions for Daniel Ring, 1 June 1942, cited in Barstad, *Norsk Motstand fra Svensk grunn*, p. 231.

⁸³ PRO: telegram from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to 4346 (E. Nielsen), 18 February 1942, letter from SOE HQ to 4346 (Nielsen), no. 23, 3 March 1942 in HS2/232. Report from 4308 (Ring) to SS (Rognes), no. 31, 10 June 1942 in HS2/129. Paper entitled, ‘The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE’s Role’, by J.S. Wilson, 6 April 1942 in HS2/218.

⁸⁴ PRO: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to General Hansteen, ref. JSW/1901, 29 October 1942 in HS2/232.

⁸⁵ PRO: letter from General Hansteen to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 3 November 1942 in HS2/232.

⁸⁶ Why this was the case is unclear. See: PRO: paper from FO IV, unsigned, 4 March 1943 in HS2/233.

⁸⁷ In February Ring out of frustration suggested that he be replaced. SOE recommended Ellingsen, who was accepted by the Norwegians and took over in March when Ring went on holiday. His position was confirmed when Bjarne Øen visited Stockholm in April 1944. It appears that Nielsen was instructed to communicate directly with the Norwegian Military Attaché on all sensitive cases, and co-operate with Heyerdahl-Larsen on all other issues. Nielsen interpreted this as not being able to communicate with Larsen on all cases concerning Milorg, which was not conducive to co-operation. PRO: telegram to Stockholm for 8628 (Mrs Bernardes), no. 0258, 1 March 1943, and letter to Lt. Col. Bjarne Øen from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. JSW/715, 30 March 1943 in HS2/233. NHM: FOIV, boks 34, mappe, 7-A-1, letter from SOE Stockholm to SOE HQ, cited in Barstad, *Norsk motstand fra Svensk grunn*, p. 245.

he also expressed a distrust of Norwegians who he felt were not pulling their weight. This was a view that had long disappeared in London. Negative feelings were, however, not unique to the British. Jens Christian Hauge later described Nielsen 'as never really co-operative'. These comments go to the core of the problem in Stockholm: a mistrust between individuals that was never completely negated, despite the development of close relationship between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities in London.⁸⁸

Although relations in Stockholm remained problematic, this does not appear to have had a direct impact at a policy level. Operations from Sweden into Norway either to carry out sabotage or organise local resistance groups continued and grew in number as the war progressed.⁸⁹ Sverre Ellingsen, based at the Norwegian Legation, and Edgar Nielsen, often worked together in order to instigating some of these operations.⁹⁰ Both SOE and FO also recognised that there were difficulties and regularly attempted to find ways to overcome them, but whilst there was collaboration in London, where policy was formulated, the problems in Stockholm remained no more than a local complication. Nevertheless, this was not an ideal background for a co-ordinated implementation of clandestine activities into Norway from Sweden, especially during the final year of the war when the intensity and number of these operations increased significantly. Consequently, and perhaps reflecting a lack of confidence in conditions in Stockholm, SOE and FO staff officers were sent out from London in an attempt to ensure co-ordination and organisation of effort.⁹¹ In effect the

⁸⁸ Nielsen complained that Axel Baumann, who replaced Heyerdahl-Larsen in MI IV, did not really want to co-operate with SOE. He liked Ellingsen but believed Baumann was trying to control Ellingsen. He accepted that things could not go back to the days of Munthe, but was unhappy with present conditions. Kjelstadli describes co-operation at this time as better. PRO: letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to SOE HQ, ref. N5, 7 January 1943. and letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) ref. N.81, 12 February 1944, in HS2/233. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, p. 126. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 324.

⁸⁹ See Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-359.

⁹⁰ An example was Operation Wagtail. For details see: PRO: HS2/212, Operation Wagtail. A. Moland, *Over grensen?*, p. 214. Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 341-342.

⁹¹ In mid-December 1944, Major H.A. Nyberg arrived in Stockholm to amongst other matters 'strengthen co-operation between the SOE Mission, Westfield Mission [OSS], Major Baumann, and other Norwegian authorities'. In March 1945, Captain J.H. Reimers from FO was sent out to Stockholm to oversee the 'Antipodes' operations and work with Lt. Colonel F.W. Ram, who had by this stage taken on Nyberg's liaison duties. PRO: paper entitled, 'Minim', (undated) in HS2/215. History of the Stockholm Mission, written by Miss Janet Gow in December 1945 in HS7/190. E. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land: antisabotasje i Norge 1944-1945*, (Oslo: NHM, 2000), p. 52.

commitment to collaboration between SOE and FO in London was eventually exported to Stockholm.

Meanwhile in the UK co-operation between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities strengthened and between 1943 and 1945 it developed into what is probably best described as a partnership. This was symbolised by the growing synergy between the administrative infrastructures of both SOE's Norwegian section and FO. By September 1944 the administrative and organisational relationship between SOE and its Norwegian colleagues had become so close that the two were able to amalgamate their staff into one office in London. In step with this between autumn 1942 and spring 1945, FO also continued its direct involvement in clandestine and subversive activities in Norway, in order to protect both Norwegian interests and to ensure a co-ordination of effort with its allies.

In March 1942, soon after the establishment of FO, a small office entitled O II was set up to take care of issues concerning the Homefront. It consisted of three officers: Jacob Schive, responsible for charting Milorg; Leif Tronstad, with responsibility for the Linge personnel and the Shetlands Base; and John Rognes, who was responsible for obtaining equipment and instructors for Milorg.⁹² The creation of this office reflected the resolve of the Norwegian authorities both to build up Milorg and to assert control over the Norwegian volunteers that were assigned to undertake clandestine activities on behalf of the British. It was also this department that initially worked with SOE. By the summer of 1942, however, SOE felt that with the number of issues that were being handled it would be valuable to have a Norwegian officer to work in its Norwegian section. This request was, nevertheless, turned down within SOE owing to the precedent it was feared it would set with other countries, where relations were not necessarily as close. Nonetheless, it was agreed that a liaison officer could be appointed to approve co-ordination between the two parties. Whether this happened on an 'official' basis is unclear, but the event is a further indication of how closely SOE was prepared to work with the Norwegian authorities.⁹³

⁹² O II was situated in the department FO III, which was responsible for land and air operations. See: FO arkiv boks 45, mappe XXXX, '*Foreløbig arbeidsprogram for III kontor*', utarbeidet av Bjarne Øen 19.3 og approbert 31.3.42, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 189-190.

⁹³ PRO: paper entitled 'Liaison between Norwegian High Command and SOE', by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. JSW/826, to General Hansteen and Colonel Christophersen, 1 July 1942.

In December 1942, however, there was a major re-organisation within FO. Department, FO IV, which had originally been responsible for naval operations, absorbed O II and under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel Bjarne Øen, took on responsibility for operations of a purely military nature and also of a ‘special’ nature in Norway in the period prior to the liberation. Øen also became a member of the ANCC and over the next two and half years established a close working relationship with SOE’s Lt. Colonel Wilson.⁹⁴ FO IV gradually expanded and by the summer of 1944 the office was divided into three sections that were responsible for administration, assistance with military plans especially those concerning Milorg and SOE, and work on *coup-de-main* operations and preparations for the protection of Norwegian industry. Six district specialists were also employed to cover the various regions of Norway.⁹⁵ These administrative and organisational developments are a further reflection of the committed and collaborative approach taken by the Norwegian military authorities to both the preparation of Milorg and its involvement in attacks against or the protection of economic sites in Norway.

In June 1944, on the recommendation of SOE, a process began which led to the amalgamation of its Norwegian section staff with that of FO IV in offices at 17 Oxford Square in London. By this time, with the involvement of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS), it was believed that the time was right to establish a ‘joint Anglo-American-Norwegian staff’. As FO IV had been associated ‘more and more in the intelligence, planning and carrying out’ of joint activities in Norway, and with the level of understanding achieved it was believed best to form a joint organisation ‘to control resistance in Norway on behalf of SHAEF’.⁹⁶ Over the next two months therefore, with the full support of the Norwegian authorities, plans were put together and approval sought for the creation of a single office. This was eventually given in principle on 28 August 1944.⁹⁷ By the final twelve months of the war, therefore, the relationship

⁹⁴ NHM: ‘*Arbeidsprogram for IV kontor*’, 5 December 1942, signed by Bjarne Øen in FO IV archive, boks 32, mappe 6-A-1. PRO: minutes of the 13th meeting of ANCC, 11 December 1942, in HS2/138.

⁹⁵ NHM: ‘*Administrasjonen samarbeid med andre norske kontorer og SOE*’, and letter from Lt. Col. Bjarne Øen, (FO IV), ref. JNA 2924, 4 July 1944, in FO IV archive, boks 32, mappe 6-A-1.

⁹⁶ PRO: memo headed ‘Joint Staff in Norwegian Section’, from DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/2252, June 1944 in HS2/235.

⁹⁷ There were altogether 18 Norwegians to be moved into joint offices at 17 Oxford Square, including Lt. Col. Øen head of FO IV, although he would also work out of the offices of the

between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities at an administrative level had clearly evolved into a partnership. This was to be particularly valuable during 1944 and 1945 when as a result of the changes in policy there was a huge increase in both the number and complexity of sabotage and protective operations in Norway as well as a major effort to prepare Milorg in time for the liberation.

Relations between SOE and the Norwegian military authorities also flourished because they agreed over the nature of their relationship and continued to share the same broad objectives. This meant that SOE could pursue its aims in Norway mostly with Norwegian backing. Both parties persisted with their long-term goal of preparing a secret army that could assist with the liberation and the restoration of a free and independent Norway. SOE accepted that this would be done in the 'name of' the Norwegian C-in-C'.⁹⁸ even though 'the war against the enemy' had to be 'continued on the basis of the strategic considerations laid down by the Chiefs of Staff'. It was also still fully aware that it 'could not carry out any work against the enemy in Norway without the services of Norwegian army and navy personnel'.⁹⁹ Moreover, within FO IV it was acknowledged that the Allies had 'the supreme leadership of the war', the means to conduct the war, and that to protect Norwegian interests it must 'co-operate as openly as possible'. It also agreed that SOE was responsible to the COS and that it would carry out operations in Norway on their instruction.¹⁰⁰

The potential manpower reserves within Milorg were also crucial to any plans to create a clandestine army in occupied Norway. During most of 1942 communication and relations with its leadership in Oslo remained problematic, and the view of SOE was that 'the stage had not yet been reached' when it was 'under the direction and control of the Norwegian High Command in London'.¹⁰¹ From the autumn of 1942, however, communication and contact began to improve

Norwegian High Command at Kingston House in London. PRO: memo from D/CE, ref. DCE/5777, 28 August 1944 and memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/2647, 12 August 1944, both in HS2/235. HS2/174, Norwegian Section History.

⁹⁸ PRO: paper entitled, 'Liaison between Norwegian High Command and SOE', for the information of General Hansteen and Colonel Christophersen, by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. JSW/826, 1 July 1942 in HS2/127.

⁹⁹ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), including paper entitled, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44' in HS2/218.

¹⁰⁰ PRO: copy of internal FO IV paper, untitled, 4 March 1943 in HS2/233.

¹⁰¹ PRO: paper entitled 'SOE in Norway and the Secret Military Organisation', by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. SN/788, 25 June 1942 in HS2/129.

and in May 1943, after a meeting in Sweden with members of FO IV, Milorg accepted its subservience to the military authorities in London when it was agreed that only FO could decide if and to what degree it would go into action.¹⁰² In these circumstances it was imperative for SOE to continue its close association with FO. The Norwegian military authorities also recognised that Milorg lacked weapons, equipment, and officers, and that there was an urgent need for instructors from outside.¹⁰³ To achieve this British support through SOE was vital. Moreover, by the summer of 1942, SOE had come to accept that it should 'meet the requests of the Norwegian High Command and SNM [Milorg] for assistance in the provision of trained personnel, arms and transportation'.¹⁰⁴ There was also a shared commitment to the role that it was believed this force would eventually undertake. At a further conference in Sweden in March 1944, between representatives of Milorg and FO IV, it was agreed that the organisation [Milorg] would be of most service by 'making preparations for a military state of readiness, which can be utilised as a link in larger plans, when the liberation draws near'.¹⁰⁵ In September 1944, in its directive to the resistance in Norway, SFHQ echoed this view when it prioritised the preparation of resistance groups in readiness to act as a protective force during the potentially chaotic period in the early hours or days after a final German surrender or collapse.¹⁰⁶

Unlike the aim of organising a clandestine army, however, the Norwegian government continued to face difficulties over sabotage. Strong opposition to such activities from the Norwegian Home Front, including Milorg, until well into 1943 meant that the government had to remain cautious in its approach to this issue. It was caught between its obligation to ensure that it was in touch with and represented the immediate interests of the Norwegian people, and its obligation to

¹⁰² This conference was held between 7-9 May at Köpmannabro in Värmland. PRO: letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to SOE HQ, ref. N.305, 10 June 1943, including a copy of the minutes from the meeting between FO and Milorg in May 1943, in HS2/233. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 310.

¹⁰³ PRO: paper entitled, 'Re-conquest of Norway', 26 March 1942, an extract from a survey made by a Committee under the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 19 January 1942 in HS2/218. Riste, *London Regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 29.

¹⁰⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Long-Term Policy in Norway', ref. JSW/1400, 21 September 1942 in HS2/128.

¹⁰⁵ This meeting was held in Stockholm between 14 and 28 March and was attended by both Bjarne Øen and Jens Chr. Hauge. PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944', (translation), 14 April 1944 in HS2/233. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 320.

¹⁰⁶ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944 in HS2/235.

contribute as best possible to the Allied defeat of Germany and thereby the liberation of Norway. In the case of sabotage it was difficult to satisfy both these requirements. This was illustrated during the summer of 1942 when owing to the action of a Communist group in Oslo, important resistance figures in Norway wrote to their government protesting strongly against acts that had severe consequences for the civilian population. In response the Norwegian government set out its position on sabotage to the resistance leadership, the people back home, and its British ally.¹⁰⁷ In August, Trygve Lie had a meeting with Laurence Collier, the British Ambassador to Norway, during which he declared that Norway's policy was to support 'warlike action from outside', but not to encourage patriots in Norway 'to commit isolated acts of sabotage'.¹⁰⁸ This was confirmed soon after in a letter to the Soviet Ambassador, in which Lie protested against radio broadcasts from Moscow that apparently encouraged random acts of violence. The letter, however, also confirmed that Norway, 'was prepared to undertake certain acts of sabotage in so far that these would be of real military significance'.¹⁰⁹ In a BBC radio broadcast by the Norwegian Prime Minister in early September he also emphasised his government's opposition to 'individual actions that did not serve any useful purpose'.¹¹⁰ Soon after a concerned British Foreign Office asked SOE to clarify its position on sabotage in Norway. In a terse reply SOE confirmed that only teams from outside undertook such acts, and these would leave signs to indicate that it was personnel sent into the country that were behind the activities. Everything was done with the approval of the ANCC and General Hansteen. Significantly, the civilian population was not encouraged 'to indulge in acts of sabotage'.¹¹¹

Nevertheless, despite stating their apparent opposition to individual and random sabotage actions within Norway, difficulties between the Norwegian government and the Home Front continued. These were sparked by SOE and FO operations that for example in October 1942 led the German authorities to declare

¹⁰⁷ PRO: letter from 'Kretsen' to the Norwegian Government in HS2/129. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 30-34. A. Moland *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, (Oslo: NHM, 1987), pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁸ PRO: Letter from L. Collier to A. Eden, no. 49, 3 September 1942, in HS2/129.

¹⁰⁹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 32.

¹¹⁰ ROH, document nr. 30, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 32.

¹¹¹ PRO: letter from Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg to E. O. Coote (Foreign Office), ref. F/5357/130/17, 23 September 1942 in FO898/241.

a state of emergency in the county of Trøndelag, around Trondheim, and eventually execute thirty-four Norwegians.¹¹² In early 1943, members of staff from within FO were called to a government meeting and criticised for their involvement in such operations and soon after the Norwegian Prime Minister described both SOE and FO as ‘irresponsible’. Trygve Lie also wrote to the resistance leadership denying that the Prime Minister and himself had any knowledge of these actions beforehand and were therefore not responsible for them, even though FO had sanctioned them under the authority of the Minister of Defence. He also claimed that they shared the Home Front’s view and agreed that people’s lives should not be put in danger ‘unnecessarily’¹¹³ In conversations with the British government, however, a different impression was presented. Lie, in a meeting with the British Ambassador in October 1942, described the British raid, Operation Muskatoon, which along with SOE activity led to the tragedy in Trøndelag, as ‘a very satisfactory achievement’, and that executions ‘were what might be expected from the Germans’.¹¹⁴

This seeming disparity is explained partly by the existence of different views on this issue within the government but more significantly by a requirement by the Norwegian authorities to take a different approach in its relations with the Home Front from those with its allies. In line with the wishes of the resistance leadership the government supported non-violent resistance in Norway. This, however, did not mean it opposed all sabotage. Provided attacks were undertaken against legitimate military targets by teams sent in from outside, they were acceptable. This was the line that SOE followed, and which allowed it to continue to work closely with the Norwegian military authorities. In April 1943, it confirmed that it was ‘SOE and Norwegian policy’, not to encourage ‘active internal resistance’, but to ‘carry out certain specific acts of sabotage from outside’.¹¹⁵ By May 1943, even Milorg had accepted that ‘in certain specific instances FO will operate actively during the time of waiting’, in other words prior to the liberation.¹¹⁶ In the summer of 1943 a copy of the ‘Directive for

¹¹² Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 163-167.

¹¹³ Leif Tronstad’s *dagbok* (diary) 9 March 1943, and ROH, dok. Nr. 85, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, pp. 36-37.

¹¹⁴ PRO: letter from L. Collier to A. Eden (Foreign Office), ref. N5230/40/30, in HS2/129.

¹¹⁵ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/Plans, ref. SN/866, 26 April 1943 in HS2/128.

¹¹⁶ PRO: Letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to SOE HQ, ref. N.305, 10 June 1943, including copy of the minutes from the meeting in May in Sweden between FO and Milorg in HS2/233.

Future Sabotage Policy for Norway' was sent by Lt. Colonel Wilson to Bjarne Øen with a note stating that he was 'glad to discuss it', exemplifying the commitment to ensuring that both parties worked together on this issue. In January 1944, Lt. Colonel Wilson also stoutly defended the Norwegian government's approach to sabotage, arguing it had never restricted SOE activity.¹¹⁷ Although this is an exaggeration, it nevertheless reflects the determination to present a shared view on this difficult matter and a strong desire within SOE to defend its Norwegian partner.

On the issue of sabotage SOE reached an accommodation with the Norwegian authorities. In the interests of collaboration it temporarily sidelined its aim of setting up a sabotage organisation in Norway and using the local population to help it attack a range of targets within the country. Policy was, therefore, up until spring 1944, slightly compromised in the interests of accommodating Norwegian concerns. During 1944, however, sabotage policy changed due to a transformation in the attitude of the resistance leadership. This will be examined in the next chapter, which deals with the impact of conditions and the development of resistance in occupied Norway on SOE policy.

Conclusion

The effect of the concerns of the Norwegian authorities on the development and evolution of SOE's plans for Norway was relatively small. The central pillars of its policy, the combination of short and long-term objectives, were not fundamentally altered. The approach of SOE toward the government in exile was based on two factors: fear and a need to retain control over subversive and underground activities in Norway. From the summer of 1940 there was a fear that if relations between the two parties broke down, SOE would be deprived of the use of the Norwegian recruits that were vital to its operations in this theatre. At the same time, however, SOE received its instructions from the COS, who were determined to make sure that subversive activities across Europe remained in accordance with overall strategy. To ensure this SOE had to maintain a measure of control or at least influence over not only the use of Norwegian volunteers but

¹¹⁷ PRO: Letter from SOE HQ (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen), ref. N.6, 23 January 1944 in HS2/128.

also resistance groups in Norway, especially Milorg. This could only be achieved through initially contact with selected members of the Norwegian government, and eventually by collaboration and a partnership with the institutions that the government set up to represent its interests in the military sector. The positive approach to co-operation taken by the Norwegian authorities also meant that SOE did not have the difficult task of working with a troublesome ally. It eventually had a partner that took the view that the best way to protect Norwegian interests was by making an active and positive contribution to the war effort. This ultimately enabled the British to secure the use of Norwegian volunteers, expertise and intelligence, whilst at the same time make sure that special operations in Norway were kept under Allied direction. In order to cement this relationship, however, SOE had to take note of Norwegian concerns, especially regarding sabotage activities and the choice of some of the military or industrial targets in Norway, but this was a relatively small price to pay to ensure that its broad objectives remained intact. SOE's relationship with the Norwegian authorities was therefore ultimately advantageous to its plans for Norway. Relations with Milorg were, however, far more problematic and difficult.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOE AND THE MILITARY RESISTANCE IN NORWAY 1940-1945: DIRECTION, SEPARATION AND FINALLY PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

It was not only SOE's relationship with the Norwegian government in exile that influenced the development of its policy for Norway, but also its interaction with the resistance movements that emerged in response to the country's occupation, particularly Milorg. SOE, Norwegian government, and Milorg all shared the same long-term objective, which was to create a clandestine army that would eventually support British or Allied forces in the liberation of the country. Milorg's view on the nature and role of this underground army in the period prior to an expected Allied landing or German collapse was, however, at least until late 1943, in several ways at odds with SOE. Consequently, early relations were difficult, which ultimately had a significant impact on the evolution of SOE's plans for this theatre of operations.

Milorg was a centralised organisation, covering a large part of southern Norway, with a leadership in Oslo. By the late spring of 1941 its central council, *Rådet*, had made contact with the Norwegian authorities in London. From this point it had a voice, which it used to articulate its views on its future role, and a leadership that began to resist attempts by SOE to control it. Its recognition by the Norwegian government in the autumn of 1941 as the 'official' military resistance gave its opinions additional weight in the unfolding discussions with the Home Front over the use and development of a secret army within occupied Norway both prior to and after an Allied landing. Initially, the resistance movements within the country, with the exception of the Communist groups, were opposed to armed and violent action that could lead to severe reprisals from the occupying regime. The view within Milorg was that a clandestine army should remain underground, unarmed, and not become involved in overt actions before the arrival of Allied forces. It believed that any participation in sabotage would threaten both its long-term integrity, and as a result of violent reprisals, undermine its support amongst the local population. This quickly put it at variance with SOE, and ultimately contributed to the British decision to restrict sabotage to *coup de main* operations carried out by teams sent in from the UK. Only in the final year of the war when the resistance leadership, owing to powerful

internal pressures, changed policy did Milorg work with SOE in the implementation of sabotage.

As the first section of this chapter will show, from late 1940 SOE set out to prepare its own secret decentralised guerrilla army in Norway using any indigenous resistance group that could be armed, organised and trained. It therefore did not in the beginning attempt to avoid or work outside the leadership of Milorg,¹ it tried to bring it under its direct authority and control. To secure the co-ordinated use of secret armies across Europe it was of central importance that the development and preparation of all military resistance groups in Norway, including Milorg, conformed to Allied direction.

The second section of the chapter will show, however, that after Milorg became a part of the Norwegian armed forces it had to be treated as a separate movement controlled jointly with FO. This proved to be a slow and difficult process as the centralisation of Milorg, with its council in Oslo, was not only seen as a security risk by SOE, but also as a barrier to ensuring that decisions over its role and use were made in London, not Norway. From the autumn of 1941, therefore, owing to concerns over this centralisation, SOE decided to organise a secret army made up from two 'distinct', although not completely separate organisations. One was based on local independent groups prepared by SOE, the other on the Milorg districts.

The third and fourth sections of this chapter will move on to show how after difficulties in the field this policy was quickly reversed and from the autumn of 1942 SOE teams and local resistance groups were instructed, where possible, to work closely with Milorg. Consequently, over the following two and half years, and despite some continuing reservations about its centralisation, SOE was, through collaboration with FO, eventually able to ensure that Milorg and its leadership became part of their partnership. It was thereby able to achieve its long-term aim of developing a decentralised secret army that could be utilised in accordance with strategic and military requirements and which was eventually able to make a significant contribution to the country's liberation. By the summer of 1944, therefore, SOE had a strong working relationship with both FO and Milorg, which would be crucial to the implementation of the Allies' plans for Norway in the months running

¹ Sverre Kjelstadli claims that SOE set out to build up a 'military underground movement' in Norway outside and independent of 'those men in Norway that had begun to organise military resistance from Oslo'. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 90.

up to and the days immediately after the capitulation of German forces in May 1945.

I

SOE and Military Resistance in Norway 1940-1941: Control over Long- Term Policy

To understand why the early relationship between SOE and Milorg was so difficult it is important to examine the nature of the occupation of Norway in the summer of 1940 and the forms of resistance that this gave rise to. It is, however, outside the limited confines of this work to go into all facets of resistance to the German occupation, either because it is not pertinent to this thesis or because it has been extensively written about before.² Nevertheless, an understanding of the origins of Milorg will help to explain its initial attitude toward clandestine activities, which were so out of line with those of SOE.

Resistance in Norway after the German occupation in the spring of 1940 was stimulated and shaped by political events within the country, specifically those that occurred during the following summer. These were the negotiations (*Riksrådforhandlingene*) between the German *Reichskommissar*, Josef Terboven, and the Presidential Board of the Norwegian Storting to establish a new constitutional government in Norway, and which included a request to King Haakon and the government in London to step down. The King rejected this invitation and the negotiations were finally ended on 25 September when Terboven banned all political parties in Norway except the *Nasjonal Samling* (NS),³ the Norwegian Nazi party led by Vidkun Quisling.⁴ From this point the German occupying regime through NS, set out to form a 'national socialist state' in Norway.⁵ Although there were many acts of

² Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*. Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI, in Skodvin, (ed.), *Norge i Krig*. Skodvin, *Striden om okkupasjonsstyret in Norge fram til 25 september 1940*. Wyller, *Nyordning og motstand*. Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*. Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*. B. Nøkleby, 'Holdningskamp' and 'Nyordning', vols. IV & III in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*. T. Gjelsvik, *Norwegian Resistance 1940-1945*, (London: Church & Co, 1979). Moland, 'Norway', in Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*.

³ Nøkleby, 'Nyordning', vol. III, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 22. Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*, p. 3

⁴ Vidkun Quisling formed NS in 1933, although it had little political significance until the arrival of the Germans. An extreme right wing nationalist party, it aroused through Quisling hatred and resistance amongst the Norwegian people. See: O. Hoidal, *Quisling: A Study in Treason*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1989). H. F. Dahl, *Quisling: A Study in Treachery*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1999), pp. 70-109.

⁵ Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*, p. 4.

individual and spontaneous protest in the country from the early months and throughout the occupation,⁶ by the summer of 1940 a small and central resistance leadership had also appeared in response to these developments. It consisted of major political, judicial, and business figures and was located in Oslo, close to political events.⁷ From an early stage, therefore, there were signs that resistance in Norway would be both organised and centralised. And by the spring of 1941, the two resistance movements that would dominate occupied Norway over the following years, the civilian based resistance and the military based resistance, eventually known as Sivorg and Milorg respectively, had begun to take shape.⁸

In the broadest terms the civilian resistance movement took the form of an unarmed but organised and active ‘rejection of the Nazi ideology as it was expressed in Norway’, and which is described by Norwegian historians as the *Holdningskamp*. It was fundamentally political and the ‘dominant’ form of resistance within the country.⁹ Military resistance crystallised around Milorg, an illegal and underground organisation that began to develop from late 1940, and which set out to create a ‘clandestine army’ that would be preserved intact to assist in its country’s eventual liberation.¹⁰ The relationship between these two movements, despite some difficulties in 1943 was never plagued by widespread conflict. By late 1943 they were working

⁶ Examples of spontaneous and individual acts of resistance included the public performing of the king’s song and the Norwegian national anthem, cutting the hair of someone who had had a relationship with a German, and refusing to sit next to Germans and Norwegian Nazis on trams and buses. Dahl argues that resistance in Norway was primarily the impulsive form, such as the illegal listening to radios or reading of illegal newspapers. See: Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*, p. 3. Moland, ‘Norway’, in Moore (ed.) *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 240. H. F. Dahl, ‘Norsk politikk 1940-1945: Kontinuitet eller brudd?’ in Dahl, (ed.) *Krigen i Norge*, p. 20.

⁷ This group often referred to as the ‘Organisation’ or ‘R-Group’ consisted of important figures such as Paal Berg, Einar Gerhardsen, and Gunnar Jahn. The aim at this early stage was to form a network, around which future resistance could be built, organised and directed. See: ROH, pp. 50-59. Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*, p. 12.

⁸ Moland, ‘Norway’, in Moore, *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 230.

⁹ Two organisations were behind civilian resistance in Norway. Firstly, the *Koordinasjonskomite* (KK), the Co-ordination Committee that was formed in the autumn of 1941 and which directed the civilian resistance movement within Norway. Secondly, the *Kretsen* that was made up from a circle of leading figures in the country, such as Paal Berg the President of the Supreme Court, and which gathered in Oslo from June 1941. This group became the body within Norway that communicated with the London government on political matters regarding the Home Front and immediate post-war constitutional issues. See: Kraglund, *Holdningskampen 1940-1942*, pp. 2-3, 16-17. Wyller, *Nyordning og motstand*. Nøkleby, ‘Nyordning’ and ‘Holdningskamp’, vols. III & IV, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*. Moland, ‘Norway’ in Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*, pp. 223-248. O.K. Grimnes, ‘Litt om Kretsen og om Hjemmefrontledelsen’ in *Norge og den 2. Verdenskrig: motstandskamp strategi og marinepolitikk*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1972), pp. 118-135. T. Halvorsen, ‘Okkupasjonshistorien og de besværlige kommunistene’, in Ugelvik Larsen (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, p. 71.

¹⁰ Moland, ‘Norway’, in Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 225. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 66-89.

together and the leadership of both had formed a close understanding. Nevertheless, it was the civilian resistance leadership that took the title *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse*, the Homefront Leadership (HL) and was recognised as the national leadership within Norway with the ‘right to represent and speak on behalf of occupied society’, whilst Milorg remained directly subservient to FO in London. During the winter of 1944/45, however, in the critical period running up to the liberation, a new structured and formalised HL was formed, which represented the various groups in Norway, including Milorg. It had a central committee that met weekly, and an *arbeidsutvalg*, a working committee consisting of four members including Jens Chr. Hauge, which met daily.¹¹ Resistance in Norway was therefore ordered, developed good working relations with the government in London, and was not riven by factions or internal feuding. Consequently, SOE did not have to confront a difficult political background, something that often complicated and degraded its activities in other occupied countries across Europe. Nevertheless, it did have to contend with resistance movements that had strong leaders who were prepared to articulate and defend their position on the role that they believed their organisations should play in occupied Norway and which had the ear of their government in London.

Moreover, there were several Communist resistance groups within occupied Norway that did not conform to the careful and predominately non-violent line followed by Sivorg and Milorg. Their activities also had an impact on the development of resistance policy, and therefore should be considered. The most prominent and influential faction was the ‘Osvald Group’, which was a continuation of a Norwegian offshoot of the Wollweber Organisation, an anti-fascist group created in 1935 by the NKVD, the Soviet secret service. Its aimed to continue the struggle against fascism through active measures, initially ship sabotage, and prepare the way for partisan or guerrilla warfare behind the frontline in a future world war. Consequently, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, there was a Communist organisation already in place within Norway that was prepared to take action against the occupying regime. It carried out its first operation on 21 July 1941 and over 100 further attacks in Norway, largely against the railways, before it was wound down in 1944. Although it was directly linked to the NKVD, the group also had contact with the Norwegian Communist Party (NKP) and from 1942 operated as its sabotage

¹¹ Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse*, pp. 10-17, 302-420.

organisation. Other Communist sabotage groups were also formed, such as the *Pelle Group* in Oslo and *Saborg* in Bergen, which had links to the NKP and continued the tradition of open and violent resistance to the German occupation. Unlike other countries in Europe, however, the Communist movement in Norway remained peripheral and was never represented within HL. Nevertheless, the Communist's 'active' approach to resistance was eventually to have consequences for Milorg and its relationship with SOE, although unlike other countries in occupied Europe it never had a major impact on SOE's plans for this theatre.¹²

In the autumn of 1940 members of the embryonic resistance leadership that had gathered in Oslo included army officers such as Major Olav Helset and Captain John Rognes, who had fought during the previous spring. They had been imprisoned but released after eventually pledging not to take up arms against the German occupiers.¹³ During the winter of 1940-1941 these men and other army officers, sometimes connected to the Norwegian General Staff from before the occupation, began to form an underground military organisation within Norway by contacting and pulling together the many small informal groups of army veterans that had come together across the country after the fighting had concluded the previous June.¹⁴ Legitimacy was given to this process when in October 1940 General Otto Ruge, the imprisoned Norwegian Commander in Chief,¹⁵ passed on his authority to these Milorg pioneers. At the time, however, he only spoke of undertaking military appraisals,

¹² Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens ledelse*, pp. 14-17. Moland, 'Norway', in Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*, pp. 232-233. L. Borgersrud, *Wollweber organisasjonen i Norge*, (PhD thesis in history at the University of Oslo, 1994). Halvøresen, 'Okkupasjonshistorien og de besværlige kommunistene', in Ugelvik Larsen, (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, pp. 59-75.

¹³ Norwegian officers were initially put in a prisoner of war camp at Grini outside Oslo. After signing a declaration not to take up arms against the German occupiers most were allowed to leave. Helset and Rognes initially refused to sign the declaration, but after Otto Ruge, the Commander-in-Chief of Norwegian forces during the spring campaign, agreed to remain in captivity as a form of pledge on behalf of all officers, they backed down. See: Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*: pp. 5-6.

¹⁴ The important Milorg pioneers included: Lt-Colonel Ole Berg, a divisional head in the Norwegian Army High Command during operations in southern Norway and later head of the 6th Brigade in northern Norway; Professor Johan Holst, head of the Army Medical Service in spring 1940; Lt-Colonel Johan Beichman former member of the Norwegian General staff who in 1942 became head of the Norwegian Army High Command; Lieutenant Paal Frisvold a former general staff officer; Captain Lasse Heyerdahl-Larsen who had led a Company; Captain Jacob Schive who had also fought in the spring of 1940. See: Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse*, pp. 44, 215-218. Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 23. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 73.

¹⁵ On 10 April Ruge was named Commander-in-Chief of the Norwegian armed forces, and on 18 May 1940, Defence-Chief and head of the newly established Norwegian high Command. After Norwegian forces capitulated he was imprisoned at Grini and later transferred to a camp in Germany. See: Dahl, [et al], *Norsk Krigsleksikon 1940-1945*, p. 339.

which was interpreted as a call for unarmed resistance and not action.¹⁶

Consequently, Milorg's leadership was founded upon the experiences of the spring of 1940 and predominately influenced by men whose background was within the pre-war Norwegian military structure, which was set up to create a mobilisation army that would only form in the event of an invasion.¹⁷ Milorg was, therefore, initially built on the conviction that it should be an underground army that would only go into action to support major operations to reoccupy the country. In the meantime it would not undertake any active resistance against the German occupation that could lead to its destruction, but quietly prepare in readiness to mobilise when called upon.¹⁸

Through the winter of 1940-1941 small groups slowly came together in the provinces under local leadership and were organised into five *kampfgrupper* (fighting groups), that corresponded to the country's old pre-war divisional borders, a process that has been described as an 'illegal re-forming of the Norwegian army'. Attempts were also made to link these groups to the central leadership that was gradually taking shape in Oslo, although at this early stage contact was tenuous.¹⁹ This incipient organisation eventually decided that it needed to formalise its leadership so that it could 'take a position on all the principal questions, appoint those that would occupy the leading positions within the organisation, and execute control over operations'.²⁰ Consequently around Easter 1941 a military council (the *Råd*) was formed to act as the highest executive authority. Under this an administrative infrastructure was also gradually put in place to run the organisation and which collectively became known as the *Sentral Ledelse*, Central Leadership (SL).²¹ By the late spring of 1941,

¹⁶ Olav Helset and Colonel Halvor Hansson were instructed by Ruge to act as his representative on military matters during his enforced absence. Instilling VI fra Undersøkelseskommissjonen (UK) av 1945, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 75. ROH, document no 11, 'Promemoria by Professor Johan Holst', 10 October 1941, p. 71. Report by Johan Holst to UK in 1945, cited in Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 24.

¹⁷ Lars Borgersrud argues that several groups of people were involved in the military resistance movement and therefore seems to imply that previous histories give the wrong impression by focusing on the officers. L. Borgersrud, 'Militære veivalg 1940-1945', in Larsen, (ed.), *I krigens kjølvann*, p. 149-150. D.G. Thompson, *From Neutrality to Nato: The Norwegian Armed Forces and Defence Policy 1905-1955*, (PhD Thesis: Ohio State University, 1996), p. 87. R.R. Eriksen & A. Moland, *Hvor uforberedt var vi 9. April?* (Oslo: NHM, undated), pp. 13-15.

¹⁸ Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens Ledelse*, p. 44.

¹⁹ Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI in Skodvin (ed.) *Norge i Krig*, pp. 30 & 35.

²⁰ Report by Ole Berg to UK, cited in Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*, p. 11.

²¹ The *Råd* originally consisted of two members, Ole Berg and Johan Holst, but in the summer of 1941 was extended to include Jacob Schive and Johan Beichman. During 1944 the *Råd* gradually became superfluous and in 1945 was re-organised. Under the *Råd* there was an organiser (O), a chief for fighting, signals, and pioneer groups (I), and a chief of supplies and transport (II). See: Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*, pp. 10-11.

therefore, Milorg was developing into a hierarchical organisation based in Oslo, but with only weak links to regional groups in southern Norway. In October 1941, it was claimed that the organisation could call on between 20-25,000 volunteers, although at this stage these numbers probably consisted of no more than lists of names. There were also only a few officers and with the exception of batches of rifles that had been hidden away after the campaign in 1940, the men were largely unarmed.²² By the autumn of 1941, therefore, although Milorg was an organisation with potentially considerable manpower reserves, it was a long way from constituting an underground army.

Between the autumns of 1940 and 1941, SOE attempted to make use of, develop, and control 'anti-Nazi' groups within occupied Norway.²³ Its initial policy of instigating a rebellion meant that even whilst Milorg was in its embryonic state, SOE had attempted to make contact with and direct local resistance organisations.²⁴ It planned to get in touch with individuals or groups that might be used to form military cadres, trained units that would stimulate and eventually lead an uprising by the civilian population across Norway. A lot of the early work was done through Malcolm Munthe in Stockholm, although at this stage of the German occupation resistance in the regions of Norway was still small-scale, local and improvised, and therefore his contacts, with the exception of those in Trondheim, do not appear to have led to much.²⁵ They do, however, illustrate that SOE was anxious to link up with any rudimentary group that it could eventually use for its own purposes.

By late 1940, the concept of a widespread rebellion had been replaced by plans to organise a secret army in Norway and in SOE's first directive one of the aims was to make the ground ready for offensive operations in southern Norway, and this

²² ROH, document no. 9, report from 'Johan Holst til general Fleischer', 28 October 1941, pp. 64-68, and no. 11, 'Promemoria ved professor Johan Holst', 10 November 1941, pp. 71-76. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I., p. 166.

²³ PRO: paper entitled, 'Rebellion in Norway', 7 June 1940 in HS2/240. Paper entitled, 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled 'Norway', 1 September 1940 in HS2/240. Draft paper entitled, 'The Planning of Revolutionary Activities' in HS8/255.

²⁴ Section D's first operation into Norway, the 'Norwegian expedition' made contact with groups around Bergen, and this was built on over the summer by further trips to the same area. Six arms dumps were also set up in the Voss area, and arms were distributed to '54 reliable Norwegians in Bergen'. PRO: 'Log of V.2.S - Aberdeen to Norway and Return', 17 June 1940, 'Extract from Diary - Summary of Achievements of the Norwegian Expedition', (undated), and report dated 6 August 1940, all in HS2/242. Paper entitled 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940 in HS2/218.

²⁵ See: PRO: HS7/174, Norwegian Section History. NHM: report entitled 'Lark', July 1945 in SOE archive, boks 35b, mappe 22/3/1. Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, pp. 123,124,147,148. A. Croft, *A Talent for Adventure*, (Upton: SPA, 1991), p. 141.

included preparing an 'organisation' that could co-operate with British forces.²⁶ This was immediately reflected in SOE's policy for Norway. From December the intention was that a separate 'anti-Nazi' organisation, a euphemism for armed resistance groups, would be prepared in each region, from Bodø north of Trondheim and across the main strategic areas of Norway, including Oslo. SOE was aware that in the capital there was already the 'nucleus of an organisation' and this would be 'fostered', although on 'somewhat special lines'. This cryptic phraseology probably refers to Milorg. The regional organisations would be formed from groups that SOE was either already in touch with, as in Trondheim, or where there was no organisation, new ones would be established. Each organisation would be kept in contact with SOE through Stockholm or across the North Sea and 'carefully picked members' from each group would be sent to the Shetlands for training.²⁷ Consequently, from the autumn of 1940 and during the following eighteen months attempts were made to send agents to western and southern Norway to contact or form local resistance groups.²⁸ Efforts were also made during 1941 to bring back parties to Britain from Norway, which after training would return home to help organise and lead the preparation of local networks. Moreover, contact was made with the Milorg leadership in Oslo, and as with other organisations it was also requested to send back officers for 'preparation'.²⁹ SOE's objective was to 'direct' the 'operations' of all these organisations in readiness for a 'simultaneous uprising all over Norway on the occasion of, but on no account in advance of, either a landing by an Allied expeditionary force, or an incipient German collapse'.³⁰

From the spring of 1941, however, two organisations were taking the first small steps toward organising a clandestine army in Norway. SOE set out to create an armed and fully prepared military force, based on any suitable organisation it was in contact with, and which could eventually be used to operate in tandem with regular units. Alongside this a group of pre-war officers in Oslo was in the early stages of

²⁶ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940 in CAB 80/56.

²⁷ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940 in HS2/128.

²⁸ NHM: List of Shetland sea-sorties, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c. For details of these operations see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-337.

²⁹ PRO: report from Arne Ekornes, 12 April 1940 in HS2/228. NHM: List of Shetland sea-sorties in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c.

³⁰ PRO: paper entitled, 'Subversive Operations in Scandinavia', a minute for the Minister, 16 December 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled, 'The Prospects of Subversion: A Country by Country Analysis', in HS8/272.

preparing an illegal underground army, which would only be mobilised to assist the expected Allied re-occupation of Norway or after a possible German withdrawal. They did not, however, despite sharing the same long-term objective, succeed at this stage in working together harmoniously. A number of issues including SOE's determination to assert control, whether or not a clandestine army should be armed and trained in readiness to support operations by regular forces and whether or not it should become active in the period prior to the country's re-occupation, all led to disagreement.

At this time SOE's attitude toward resistance groups in Norway was that it would 'sponsor any responsible organisations of sufficient size to be useful',³¹ which included Milorg. Therefore, until the autumn of 1941, its policy was, through employing ex- Milorg pioneers in London and Stockholm and using couriers from the Shetlands and across the Swedish border, to make contact with Milorg's leadership in Oslo and thereby incorporate it into its vision of a secret army. SOE used its contact with the Norwegian authorities in London in order to make use of John Rognes,³² and thus 'bring his whole organisation' under its 'control'.³³ Rognes was initially based on the Shetlands so as to establish a link with the headquarters of Milorg,³⁴ through which 'advice' could be sent to the organisation on 'how to proceed' with its work and attempts made to bring back men to be trained as 'instructors' in SOE business'.³⁵ The original intention was that Rognes would have radio contact with Ålesund on Norway's west coast to help improve communications and thereby strengthen the link with the Shetlands Base. From mid-March, however, communication was established with Oslo through a courier, Arne Ekornes, who had been sent over to the Shetlands by Milorg.³⁶ SOE also hoped to improve contact with Norway and speed up its

³¹ PRO: telegram from SO2 to 4301 (Malcolm Munthe), 28 April 1941 in HS2/231.

³² See above, chapter three, pp. 93-94.

³³ SOE were aware that Rognes was closely associated with Colonel Olaf Helset in Milorg. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', week ended 25 February 1941' in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. Report on interview with SS (Rognes), 19 February 1941, in HS2/228.

³⁴ PRO: memo to A/DA (Charles Hambro) from SA (A. A. Flygt), 5 March 1941, and telegram from Lerwick to London, 16 April 1941, in HS2/228. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports for S Section', weeks ending 4 and 11 March 1941' in SOE Archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

³⁵ PRO: report on Arne Ekornes to the Royal Norwegian Minister of Defence, London, April 12 1941 in HS2/228.

³⁶ Rognes was sent to the Shetlands in March 1941. Arne Ekornes arrived from the Shetlands for the first time on 16 March on board the 'Sigurd' with a mission from Paal Frisvold. He returned to Norway on 22 March and met Frisvold the day before he fled to Stockholm. He returned from Oslo again on 11 April on a mission from Jacob Schive, Frisvold's replacement. PRO: interview with Rognes, S1 (F. Stagg), and S3 (Lt. Chaworth-Musters), 24 February 1941, memo from SA (A. A. Flygt) to A/DA (Charles Hambro), 5 March 1941, and report on Arne Ekornes to the Royal Norwegian

preparation of resistance groups through a plan to send fishing boats from the Shetlands at fortnightly intervals to pre-determined locations on the Norwegian coast. Using the BBC's Norwegian broadcast, the aim was to send a signal five days prior to a boat's arrival in the country. This would have been a real, scheduled 'bus service' if it had ever been implemented.³⁷ Furthermore, SOE saw Paal Frisvold in Stockholm as someone belonging to an 'organisation' that it was 'working with', and although Frisvold proved less pliant than Rognes he became another route through which the organisation attempted to communicate with and direct Milorg.³⁸

SOE's activities in Norway and its attempt to control Milorg, however, soon led to some expressions of concern. It became evident during the spring of 1941 that there were reservations in Oslo over what SOE was trying to do, although initially Milorg reluctantly continued to go along with British requests and agreed to send groups over to the UK for specialist training. Arne Ekornes reported that Frisvold, before he left for Sweden, had told him that future work must proceed 'very quietly and slowly' and that weapons must be left to later. He also claimed that Jacob Schive, Frisvold's replacement, had told him that weapons dumps were not welcome and that Milorg was not prepared to undertake hostile actions against the Germans. Nevertheless, when Ekornes was in Oslo in March he asked Milorg, on behalf of SOE, to send ten men to Britain to be trained as 'instructors' and an attempt was made to pick these men up from the Norwegian coast in early April, but was unsuccessful. Later Jacob Schive was instructed to send eight men to Britain, and these were successfully picked up at the end of May. In June, Munthe was also told to contact Schive and arrange for four wireless operators to travel Britain for six weeks training.³⁹ During spring 1941, therefore, the concerns of Milorg were ultimately ignored and at this stage had no impact on SOE's plans.

With the formation of *Rådet*, its military council, however, Milorg not only began to take control of its own activities, but it also started to assert its own position

Ministry of Defence, London, April 12 1941 in HS2/228. NHM: List of Shetland sea-sorties, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c.

³⁷ PRO: note from SA (A. A. Flygt) to SY, 27 June 1941 in HS2/231.

³⁸ PRO: telegram to 4301 (Munthe) from SO2, 21 April 1941, and telegram to 4301, 1 May 1941 in HS2/228.

³⁹ Jacob Schive claims in his memoirs that an Englishman turned up in Oslo and requested that he send these men to Britain. Who this was is unclear. PRO: Report on Arne Ekornes to the Royal Norwegian Minister, London, 12 April and telegram 0100 to 4301 (Munthe) from SO2, 27 June 1941 in HS2/228. J. Schive, *Tyve år etter*, (Oslo: J. Chr. Gundersen, 1960), p. 11. NHM: list of Shetland sea-sorties, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c.

on key matters. Importantly it turned to its king and government in London for legitimacy. In June 1941, in its 'report' addressed to King Haakon in London it stated that weapons should not be delivered until 'immediately' before they were required. It also expressed its strong opposition to sabotage, which it believed would put at risk both its organisation and the local population. Its immediate purpose was to provide a military apparatus that would be available to any internal leadership that was recognised and responsible to the king. It was this civilian authority that would decide when it would be used.⁴⁰ Milorg was effectively rejecting the control and ideas that SOE was attempting to impose upon it.

SOE's reply to Milorg, the revealingly entitled, 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway', was sent to Oslo via Stockholm in August and despite an initial welcoming of Milorg's report it largely rejects the views expressed within it. The directive outlines SOE's objectives in Norway, to form a secret army and undermine German fighting capability through sabotage undertaken by teams from outside or by groups within Norway. A clandestine army, however, must receive arms and training 'in advance' so that it could 'play its part at a given signal and in accordance with a pre-arranged plan' for either a separate invasion of Norway or as part of a 'general offensive' and the calling out of secret armies all across Europe. It was also important to carry out sabotage to cause the Germans in Norway 'as much trouble as possible and to force them to keep large garrisons there'. Although SOE recognised that the work had to continue carefully and therefore not put at risk either the resistance groups or the local population, it rejected the unarmed, untrained, and passive approach recommended by Milorg.⁴¹

A few weeks later this divergence of views between SOE and Milorg continued when Jacob Schive in Oslo drafted a reply to SOE's directive. In this he states that only 'men living in Norway should be allowed to decide upon the uses to which the Military Organisation could be put, and that the organisation stood directly

⁴⁰ This document, produced by the *Råd* and for the attention of John Rognes, was photographed and sent to the Shetlands sewn in the jacket of someone who was travelling to Britain to become a flyer. On 27 June 1941 Malcolm Munthe was instructed to contact Schive to say the report had been received. PRO: 'Report to His Majesty the King', (translation), 10 June 1941 in HS2/231. Schive, *Tyve år etter*, p. 12.

⁴¹ The directive was sent to Stockholm early in August, deciphered and passed to Paal Frisvold. A courier then delivered copies of the document, secreted using invisible ink on handkerchiefs, to Schive in Oslo. PRO: 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway in reply to their report dated 10 June 1941 and addressed to H.M. King Haakon' in HS2/231. Schive, *Tyve år etter*, p.14.

responsible to the 'King and Government in London'.⁴² A conflict over the control and use of Milorg was underway and at its centre were the issues of sabotage and the lines along which a secret army should be developed in the period prior to its anticipated use. This was the start of difficult relationship between SOE and Milorg that would last until well into 1943 and which would eventually result in changes in aspects of British policy on clandestine activities in Norway.

II

SOE and Milorg 1941-1942: From Control to Separation

In the spring of 1941, Milorg became a hierarchical organisation with a central leadership that began to formulate a position on principle issues such as the supply of weapons and sabotage. Some of its leaders had already been arrested or forced to flee the country, which appeared to justify its careful, go-slow approach to the organisation of a secret army. Moreover, in a search for recognition, approval of its views, and to strengthen its status with the British, it looked to its government in London for the authority to continue its work.⁴³ This ultimately resulted in an irrevocable change in its relationship with SOE.

In October 1941, after their arrival in Britain, Jacob Schive and Johan Holst reported on their organisation direct to the Norwegian authorities.⁴⁴ From this point other members of the Norwegian government, not just its Foreign Minister, were fully aware of Milorg's existence, its work and its difficulties with SOE. Therefore a decision had to be made about its future. The government concluded that it could not allow a military force to operate in Norway independently, and accordingly it was decided to bring Milorg under its control. Consequently, in November 1941, it was formally recognised and placed under the authority of initially HOK, and from February 1942 under FO.⁴⁵ From then on Milorg was the fourth arm of the

⁴² Schive replied to the SOE directive although he claims that it never reached Britain. A document in the SOE archives in London appears, although its origin is unclear, to suggest that at least a draft of Schive's communication eventually reached SOE. Trygve Lie also claims that further communications were sent to London. PRO: document headed both, 'Rough Draft of report by 4343' (Schive), and copy of hand-written letter headed 'From R (Rådet) to the Government and Norwegian General', signed by 4343 (Jacob Schive) in HS2/231. Schive, *Tyve år etter*, p. 17. Lie, *Med England i ildlinjen*, p. 250.

⁴³ Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*, pp. 12-13.

⁴⁴ ROH: document no. 8, report by 'Jakob Schive til General Fleischer', 28 October 1941, pp. 60-64, and No. 9, report by 'Johan Holst til general Fleischer', 28 October 1941, p. 64-68.

⁴⁵ At a meeting of the Norwegian Defence Committee on 20 November 1941 a resolution was agreed in which 'the government acknowledged the military organisation in Norway and its executive

Norwegian armed forces, with its members under military command, and it was the only authorised military resistance movement in Norway. This not only altered SOE's relationship with the Norwegian authorities but also Milorg, which it could no longer influence directly or shape as it wished. It would only be able to achieve its vision of a secret army in Norway through working with FO and using it as a means to bring Milorg in line with British views. This proved to be a difficult and problematic process, and would ultimately only be successful when Milorg, in response to developments and changes within Norway, decided to change.

On 28 October when Harry Sporborg and Malcolm Munthe met Jacob Schive and Johan Holst, Schive again raised Milorg's concerns over the issues of sabotage and the supply of arms.⁴⁶ In response, through Sir Charles Hambro's memo on Anglo-Norwegian collaboration that led to the formation of the ANCC, SOE acknowledged that it was important to have a system in place that considered the views of Milorg. And one of the tasks of a future, joint committee would be to prepare a secret army for action within Norway in conjunction with the heads of this clandestine organisation. There were, therefore, signs that SOE was prepared to work with Milorg, give it a degree of parity, and no longer saw it as simply another indigenous resistance group. Nevertheless, SOE still believed that a future underground army should be based on well-trained and equipped military cadres in each district of Norway, all with radio contact with the UK. It would therefore be a decentralised organisation that could be controlled from London to ensure that 'the work in Norway' was kept in line with its 'policy in other parts of occupied Europe'. Hambro's memo also emphasises that sabotage against key strategic targets would have to be continued, but with the important concession that in the future it would be 'confined' to attacks against key targets undertaken by special sabotage teams sent in from the UK. These would be kept separate from the secret army, in order to preserve its integrity, and have the approval of a joint committee.⁴⁷ Passive resistance was still acceptable and the commitment to the eventual and 'appropriate' use of 'separate sabotage cells' was held onto within SOE's ranks, but whilst there was opposition

represented by the *råd*'. The resolution goes on to say that 'all that are involved in military preparations for the fight to free Norway are loyally invited to subordinate themselves to this organisation. They shall be considered as standing under military command'. FD 1325, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 163.

⁴⁶ PRO: Letter from Jacob Schive to AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg), 12 November 1941 in HS2/127.

⁴⁷ PRO: memo from Sir Charles Hambro to Oscar Torp, ref. CH/88, 25 November 1941, with paper 'Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Regarding the Military Organisation in Norway', 24 November 1941

from the Norwegian government and Milorg, they would not be developed. SOE, however, did not compromise its belief that a clandestine army in Norway should be based on local groups, armed, trained, and controlled from the UK. This was very different from Milorg, which wanted a centralised organisation that would wait passively for the day when Allied forces arrived and only then receive arms and go into action. The issue was how to accommodate these two different views.

From the late autumn of 1941 and especially after the establishment of the ANCC in February 1942 to ‘control the Secret Organisation in Norway’,⁴⁸ SOE worked closely with the Norwegian military authorities in order to achieve its idea of a jointly controlled de-centralised guerrilla army in Norway. It did not set out to create its own organisation separate from Milorg that could be ‘active’ in Norway through sabotage in the period prior to an eventual liberation,⁴⁹ but decided that a clandestine army in Norway should be built on a combination of local SOE groups and Milorg district organisations. SOE objected to Milorg’s structure with a leadership based in Oslo that had links to the regions. The arrest of several members of Milorg’s leadership during 1941⁵⁰ was in the eyes of SOE a symptom of the organisation’s over centralisation, which it believed made it a security threat. It was considered by some that the *Råd* would be ‘of very little use in the event of military operations directed from Britain’, and therefore SOE decided it should ‘entirely disassociate from the old central organisation in Oslo’. Work would be directed ‘for the time being’ through individual agents rather than through ‘high military personages connected with the Norwegian army’.⁵¹ SOE wanted a secret army based on local ‘guerrilla organisations’ in the key strategic areas of the country. They would consist of trained and equipped military cadres, each the nucleus of a military force that could expand if required. These cadres would be made up of small ten man guerrilla units recruited from local Milorg organisations or independent groups that SOE had set up, and which in support of regular forces could lead attacks against key tactical targets, such as communications and local garrisons.⁵²

in HS2/127.

⁴⁸ PRO: memo from SOE HQ to 4346 (E. Nielsen), ref. N. 23, 3 March 1942 in HS2/ 232.

⁴⁹ See footnote 76, p. 103.

⁵⁰ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 126-127.

⁵¹ PRO: memo entitled ‘Reference M’s memo of 24 November 1941’, from S2 (Major R. C. Holme) to S (George Wiskeman), 26 November 1941 in HS2/231.

⁵² PRO: memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins, 28 November 1941 in HS8/237. Paper entitled ‘SOE Operations in Norway’, 27 March 1942 in HS2/128.

To achieve its objective SOE set out to persuade Milorg to revert to a more decentralised structure based on separate and independent districts.⁵³ Each local district would be made up of these cadres of armed and equipped men in contact with an organiser supplied by SOE, if it was believed safe. It would also have propaganda cells to keep up the morale of the local people, where appropriate separate sabotage cells, and be put in touch with the UK through the provision of radio operators from Britain. Milorg's central council would be discouraged from having contact with these districts. Alongside this SOE also considered itself free to set up its own local groups that would have no contact with Milorg units, whilst specific acts of sabotage would be undertaken by teams sent in from the UK but without the knowledge of the local branch of Milorg.⁵⁴ In effect a secret army would consist of both SOE groups and Milorg district organisations. They would be kept 'distinct', and there would be no 'crossing of lines', but the intention was that they would be two parts of one clandestine force in Norway.⁵⁵

This vision of a composite and decentralised guerrilla army directed from London was formally and officially recognised in May 1942. At a meeting of the ANCC, attended by General Hansteen, it was agreed that Milorg groups, described as the 'Secret Army', and SOE groups, both under the authority of the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief, should be kept apart until it was decided to combine them. It was, however, also accepted that there could not be complete separation. Local radio operators, through the use of a 'cut-out', could in exceptional circumstances still serve both organisations, and SOE would provide Milorg with arms and demolition instructors. It was also envisaged that small 'guerrilla bands' could be detached from Milorg to be trained by SOE to operate in advance of the main Milorg forces.⁵⁶

Both SOE and the Norwegian military authorities, therefore, at this point believed that it was necessary to organise two parallel organisations in Norway. SOE had lost all confidence in Milorg's leadership and in June 1942, Lt. Colonel Wilson

⁵³ It is claimed that instructions were sent to Milorg through the Norwegian government at this time asking them to revert to a more decentralised structure. PRO: memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 25 November 1941 in HS8/237. Paper entitled 'The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE's Role', 6 April 1942 in HS2/218.

⁵⁴ PRO: memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 25 November 1941 in HS8/237. Memo from SOE HQ to 4346 (Nielsen), ref. no. 23, 3 March 1942, and letter from SOE HQ to SOE Stockholm, 13 May 1942 in HS2/232. Paper entitled 'SOE Operations in Norway', 27 March 1942 and paper entitled 'The Re-conquest of Norway', 6 April 1942 in HS2/218.

⁵⁵ PRO: paper entitled, 'The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE's role', 6 April 1942, in HS2/218.

⁵⁶ PRO: minutes of a 'Special Meeting of Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee', 13 May 1942 in HS2/138.

launched a vitriolic attack against what he described as ‘the military clique’ of officers that ‘demand to be informed of everything that is going’ and ‘resent outside interference’. To him they were ‘amateurs’.⁵⁷ The Norwegian military authorities were also fully aware of the important contribution that Milorg could make to an eventual liberation, but understood, however, that the organisation lacked officers, arms, and equipment, and it was nowhere near ready for action. It still needed a great deal of time and preparation to make it ready and it therefore had to be protected. Direct involvement with another organisation could threaten its future.⁵⁸

SOE’s long-term aim was through collaboration to put in place its vision of a secret army, which was based on the concept of using guerrilla units behind enemy lines in support of operations by regular forces. It was an idea that can be traced back at least to the work done within MI (R).⁵⁹ In the spring of 1942, Milorg was seen as one strand of an underground army that would consist of two parallel but detached organisations controlled from London not Oslo. It was a pragmatic approach that attempted to accommodate Milorg at a time when it was believed that its leadership was neither ready nor prepared to comply with SOE’s wishes.

III

SOE and Milorg 1942-1943: A Move to Integration

In June 1942, Lt. Colonel Wilson wrote that, ‘SOE’s role [was] to endeavour to steer a safe passage amongst all these shoals and difficulties so as to create the maximum opposition and resistance to the enemy in event of an Allied landing’.⁶⁰ Attempts to steer a secret army in Norway composed of two ‘distinct’⁶¹ organisations, however, quickly proved unrealistic. The leadership of SOE’s Norwegian section was also never totally convinced that this approach was viable. In a paper written in late June 1942, Lt. Col. Wilson expressed reservations about allowing two organisations to operate in a country with such a small population,⁶² and by the end of the month,

⁵⁷ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations’, ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942, in HS2/128

⁵⁸ PRO: paper entitled ‘Re-conquest of Norway: The Norwegian “Home Front” and the Norwegian Army in UK’, extract from a survey made by a Committee under the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 19 January 1942 in HS2/218.

⁵⁹ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Duties and Activities of MIR’, by J.C.F. Holland, 22 July 1940, in HS8/256.

⁶⁰ PRO: paper entitled ‘Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations’, ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942 in HS2/128.

⁶¹ PRO: paper entitled, ‘The Re-conquest of Norway: SOE’s role’, 6 April 1942, in HS2/218.

⁶² PRO: paper entitled ‘Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations’, ref. JSW/658, 5 June

after a series of local difficulties with Milorg, he felt that it was impossible ‘to keep two or more separate secret organisations from becoming hopelessly entangled’.⁶³ It nevertheless remained essential for SOE to ensure that key military decisions were made in London, not Oslo. Consequently, Lt. Col. Wilson, in a paper produced at the end of June 1942, emphasised the importance of establishing a direct link between the Milorg leadership and the ‘Norwegian C-in-C’ in London through the provision of a radio operator. Milorg was a ‘latent body’ that would come into ‘operation’ only ‘under the instructions’ of the Norwegian military authorities in ‘the event of an Allied landing’.⁶⁴ Copies of this paper went to Colonel Christophersen in the Norwegian General Staff and to Brigadier Colin Gubbins, SOE’s Director of Operations and Training. Gubbins’ reply is very revealing and indicative of SOE’s attitude. He wrote that SOE was ‘to assist Hansteen in every way possible to gain confidence and control of SMO [Milorg]’, and by doing this SOE would ‘eventually have Hansteen and SMO’.⁶⁵ In other words at the heart of SOE’s relationship with both FO and Milorg was a resolve to dominate both, and during the first few months of 1942 it was believed that control over Milorg could best be achieved through direct contact with its local branches and by avoiding the central leadership in Oslo.

This policy was, however, abandoned in August 1942. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, with the arrest or departure abroad of many of the leading members of Milorg in 1941 a new leadership began to emerge in Oslo that was not as closely linked to the pre-war army. This resulted during 1942 in a series of reforms that led Milorg to become what has since been described as a ‘countrywide guerrilla organisation’, which could support an Allied landing through guerrilla warfare.⁶⁶ The five *kampfgrupper* were abandoned and Milorg was initially re-organised into fourteen districts, numbered eleven to twenty four, later revised so that the districts were numbered eleven to twenty seven in southern Norway and forty and forty-one in the north. Each district was made up of smaller administrative and operational units and had a District-Chief and staff.⁶⁷ General guidance still emanated from Milorg’s

1942 in HS2/128.

⁶³ PRO: paper entitled, ‘SOE in Norway and the Secret Military Organisation’, ref. SN/788, 25 June 1942, in HS2/232.

⁶⁴ PRO: paper entitled ‘SOE in Norway and the Secret Military Organisation, ref. SN/788, 25 June 1942, in HS2/232.

⁶⁵ PRO: hand-written note from M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 3 July 1942, in HS2/232.

⁶⁶ Moland, *Milorg 1941-1943*, pp. 19-22.

⁶⁷ Milorg districts were divided into *Avsnitt* (Sections), and *Områder* (Areas), which included small local operational units *Grupper* (Groups) that were made up of 2-4 *Trupper* (Platoons), which were

central leadership through a series of directives, a total of twenty between summer 1942 and spring 1945, but this new structure was a move toward de-centralisation and therefore a break with the past. Alongside this Milorg also announced that it was prepared to accept weapons and equipment from outside and to allow its men to be trained so that they would be able to support future Allied operations.⁶⁸ This re-organisation meant that Milorg now had a structure and a view of its future role that was more in tune with SOE. Moreover, in spring 1942, in response to the difficulties that had occurred between SOE groups and Milorg in Norway, FO decided to send Jacob Schive to Oslo in attempt to improve relations.⁶⁹ He met leaders of the Home Front and on his return provided SOE with a copy of Milorg's first 'General Directive', which set out the changes to the organisation, and reported on his visit.⁷⁰ After meeting Schive, the attitude within the Norwegian section altered. The opinion was that there had been 'a considerable change for the better', 'safety' was the 'watchword' and importantly Milorg was prepared to 'receive the orders of General Hansteen as C-in-C'.⁷¹ For SOE this meant the Milorg leadership had become less of a security risk and there were indications that it was prepared to accept central direction. It was also accepted that the decision to allow two secret armies to develop in an occupied country with a small population, such as Norway, had proved unworkable. The difficulties in the field that SOE experienced with Milorg groups during the spring of 1942 were seen as a security risk that threatened both groups, and therefore, where possible, it was felt that in the future it was better to co-ordinate SOE activities through the local Milorg organisation.⁷²

made up of 2-4 *Lag* (teams). The team was the smallest fighting unit of 6-12 men. See: map entitled 'Milorg Districts', pp. xi - xii.

⁶⁸ Milorg issued its first 'Directive' in summer 1942, which stated that the organisation was to prepare 'itself for guerrilla and sabotage actions on an Allied invasion of Norway'. During the waiting period groups should be trained for such warfare and accept weapons and equipment from outside. Altogether it issued 20 directives, the last one dated 6 May 1945. See: Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 120.

⁶⁹ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 193.

⁷⁰ The report on Milorg was presented to Lt. Colonel Sporborg and Lt. Col. Wilson on the evening of 13 August. PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/1305, 8 September 1942, including paper entitled, 'The Norwegian Home Front: General Directive', ref. SN/1305. Memo from SN (Lt. Colonel J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/1162, entitled 'Recent Mission to Secret Military Organisation Headquarters, Oslo' 15 August 1942, both in HS2/232.

⁷¹ PRO: letter to SOE Stockholm for 6207 (Mr. P. Falk) from SOE HQ, signed by SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), 14 August 1942 in HS2/232.

⁷² PRO: memo entitled, 'Recent Mission to Secret Military Organisation Headquarters, Oslo' from SN (Lt. Colonel J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/1162, 15 August 1942 in HS2/232.

In August 1942, in response to these developments, Brigadier Colin Gubbins issued a 'Directive as to Future Policy' in Norway. In this document Milorg is described as an organisation of 25,000 members, divided into military districts, and with a leadership that is prepared to receive arms and instruction. It expresses the fear that if SOE agents arrived in the districts without proper accreditation they risked being treated as 'agents provocateurs', and that therefore contact with Milorg should be extended with the 'establishment of direct W/T communication, the provision of instructors, and the supply of arms'. Most significantly, in the future Milorg and the existing SOE organisations would 'be linked up as far as possible'.⁷³

In September 1942, after 'cogitation' on Gubbins directive on Norway, Lt. Col. Wilson issued a paper entitled, 'SOE Long Term Policy in Norway'. This document sets out in more detail SOE's future approach to Milorg. With regard to the development of a clandestine army, SOE would endeavour to meet the requests of the Norwegian military authorities in London and Milorg, although initiative and planning would remain with SOE, with the agreement of FO. Most importantly control should not be allowed to pass from 'London to Oslo' as the direction of 'final operations' had to remain 'with the Allied High Command'. Copies of this document were sent to Brigadier Gubbins, Charles Hambro, who by this time was the Executive Director of SOE, General Hansteen, and to the British and Norwegian Legations in Stockholm. Not everyone accepted its contents; Malcolm Munthe was very critical, arguing that too much power was being placed in the hands of the Norwegian authorities. Nevertheless, the policy on relations with Milorg as articulated in this document remained in place for the remainder of the war.⁷⁴

By late 1942, after a number of shifts in policy, SOE finally accepted that the creation of a clandestine army in Norway had to be a collaborative and joint effort. Its earlier attempts to assert direct control and work outside the leadership in Oslo had proved unworkable. This collaboration still did not, however, at this stage, extend to sabotage. Milorg warned against actions that might lead to reprisals and even

⁷³ PRO: paper entitled 'Present Situation in Norway and Directive as to Future Policy', from D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. DCDO/1255, 26 August 1942 in HS2/232.

⁷⁴ Norwegian historians incorrectly see SOE's change in its relationship to Milorg originating with Wilson's paper in September 1942. PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Long-Term Policy in Norway', ref. JSW/1400, 21 September 1942 in HS2/218. Note from D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to C/D, (Charles Hambro), 1 October 1942 in HS2/232. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 184, and Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 28.

requested that 'instructors and other agents that came from Britain must be ordered not to shoot Germans, even in self-defence'.⁷⁵ Despite a request by Brigadier Gubbins for an increase in 'incendiarism' and for an attack against a target in the interior of the country to be carried out by an 'existing organisation',⁷⁶ SOE also realised that the ANCC had 'in part' to be guided 'by the views of those directing' activity in Norway in working out policy. This meant that at this stage, although 'passive' resistance, the adoption of 'go-slow' methods, was still acceptable, it continued to be only trained teams 'sent over to Norway to do the job' that would undertake sabotage in Norway.⁷⁷

It was therefore not only its relationship with the Norwegian government but also with Milorg that had an impact on SOE's plans for Norway. It remained a priority for SOE to work with both these parties not only because they were the source of the important manpower reserves and the support that it needed in order to complete its military tasks, but because it was seen as the only way to ensure Allied control over special operations in this theatre. Co-operation was, therefore, a means to help SOE achieve its aims. Nevertheless, despite a shared long-term aim relations with Milorg had been difficult and problematic and therefore even by the end of 1942, there was still not a unified and prepared underground army in place in Norway. As with the Norwegian authorities, however, SOE's relationship with Milorg would eventually turn out to be beneficial for the Allies.

IV

SOE and Milorg 1943-1945: in the Shadow of the Liberation.

Between early 1943 and May 1945, the relationship between SOE and Milorg developed into an effective and valuable working relationship. Owing to the significant role assigned to clandestine forces during Norway's liberation this was important. Initially, however, difficulties remained as SOE continued to be concerned about the centralisation of Milorg. But as contact and communication between FO

⁷⁵ FA, *hylle* 21, FO-H, mappe, 'Telegrams from Stockholm, November 42-March 43', dok, der av 15 October 1942, SL til FO, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 303.

⁷⁶ PRO: paper entitled 'Present Situation in Norway and Directive as to Future Policy', from D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. DCDO/1255, 26 August 1942 in HS2/232.

⁷⁷ PRO: Letter from Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg, to E. O. Coote at the British Foreign Office, ref. F/5357/130/17, 23 September 1942 in HS2/129.

and Milorg improved, and its leadership in Oslo formally accepted that it had to be subordinate to decisions made in London, relations improved. Moreover, a change in policy by the Home Front, which allowed Milorg groups to become active within Norway prior to the liberation, helped to extend co-operation between SOE and Milorg at a local level.

In the autumn of 1942, a set of instructions was drawn up jointly by SOE and FO for teams or agents going into Norway. From this point the policy was that in districts where only Milorg existed, in the future NIC (1) teams would provide help, whilst in areas where only SOE groups operated, Milorg would when possible offer support. In areas where both organisations existed, however, SOE groups would come under the control of Milorg.⁷⁸ This indicates that in future Milorg would constitute the core of a clandestine army, although it would not necessarily be the only component. Nevertheless, despite this attempt to formalise relations, the problems associated with a policy of allowing separate groups to operate within Norway did not immediately disappear. During the autumn of 1942, local Milorg organisations continued to face difficulties due to the activities of SOE teams.⁷⁹ Frustration within Milorg was so strong that it was claimed after the war that the organisation even considered ‘giving up’.⁸⁰ At the centre of this was poor communication, especially between the UK and Oslo. An attempt in autumn 1942 to provide the Milorg leadership with radio contact failed after only a few weeks.⁸¹ Importantly, these problems continued to fuel scepticism within SOE, which was quick to re-affirm ‘the difficulties [that] one is up against when dealing with the Home Front’.⁸²

⁷⁸ This document, which went through several changes, was primarily the work of Leif Tronstad. The work was done in conjunction with Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, who on 2 October 1942 wrote to Tronstad saying that he had signed each paper as a mark that they had ‘been approved by SOE so far as general terms are concerned’. PRO: document entitled, ‘Direction for groups with special tasks in Norway’, 25 September 1942, in HS2/232.

⁷⁹ Three SOE operations in particular, ‘Bittern’ around Oslo, ‘Heron’ in the county of Trøndelag and ‘Swan’ in the south resulted in difficulties for Milorg. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, pp. 40-45. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 167-168. For details see, Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway, 1940-1945’, pp. 334-338.

⁸⁰ Ole Berg i sin forklaring til UK 1945 av 7 February 1947, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 171-172.

⁸¹ This was Operation Plover. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, p. 31. For details see, Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway, 1940-1945’, pp. 337-338.

⁸² PRO: copy of internal FO IV memo, 3 March 1943 in HS2/233. Internal SOE paper entitled ‘Précis-Bittern Operation’, 3 February 1943 in HS2/200.

From December 1942, however, SOE began working closely with FO IV in London in an attempt to resolve these issues. In early 1943, through the ANCC, both organisations re-emphasised the importance of de-centralisation, and that contact with groups in Norway should be made not only through Oslo but direct to the districts. The Milorg leadership would, however, in the future be advised when teams were sent to Norway.⁸³ This was not about SOE distrusting or deciding to work outside Milorg;⁸⁴ the policy of working with and through Milorg groups when possible remained intact. By this stage SOE were clear that large-scale subversive activity in Norway could only be carried out through ‘the local military organisation’.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, it shows that there was still some scepticism toward the Milorg leadership and a determination to ensure that control and authority was exercised from the UK.

From the late spring of 1943 contact with Milorg began to improve which ultimately and significantly led to greater level of accord. The first of a series of conferences involving representatives of Milorg and FO was held in Sweden in May - others followed in October 1943 and in March 1944⁸⁶ – and this marked the start of a close working relationship between Bjarne Øen and Jens Chr. Hauge.⁸⁷ The meeting in May discussed Milorg’s role prior to an invasion, during an invasion, and immediately after re-occupation. It was agreed that only FO would decide ‘if, and to what degree, units of Milorg’ would be used in the event of an invasion and that it would be trained in the use of arms in readiness to provide support ‘from within’. It was accepted that FO had contacts in certain areas with other groups and that Milorg districts would have direct radio contact with FO, and most significantly Milorg’s central leadership would in the future only ‘co-ordinate and administer’ the work across the country. This agreement was a watershed in the relationship between Milorg, FO, and ultimately SOE.⁸⁸ Although it did not take part, SOE was aware of

⁸³ PRO: minutes of ANCC meetings of 8 January and 12 February 1943 in HS2/138.

⁸⁴ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 37-38.

⁸⁵ PRO: Memo from D/CD (0), (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins) to CD (Sir Charles Hambro), 1 October 1942 in HS2/232.

⁸⁶ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 310-312, 316-317, 320-321.

⁸⁷ They would meet on several occasions in London, and in early 1945, Øen travelled to Stockholm and from there to Norway where he again met Hauge. See: PRO: HS7/174 Norwegian Section History. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*: p. 144.

⁸⁸ Ole Berg and Lasse Heyerdahl Larsen were sent from the Norwegian Legation in Stockholm, whilst Olaf Helset, Jens Chr. Hauge, and Carl Semb represented Milorg. PRO: letter from 8627 (Nielsen) in Stockholm to SOE HQ, ref., N305, 10 June 1943, including paper entitled ‘translation of minutes from 8633’ in HS2/233. Lieutenant Bjarne Øen and Captain Jacob Schive represented FO IV and FO-H.

the 'general agreement' reached in Sweden, which it saw as providing FO with the authority to issue 'directives', whilst Milorg was confined to 'general supervision'. Moreover, it was also accepted that as Milorg was more likely to accept instructors it could be better prepared for its contribution to the eventual re-occupation or liberation of its country.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, there were still some residual concerns over Milorg's tendency to centralise, and it was re-iterated that SOE could not allow itself to be governed by 'the wishes' of the 'Military Organisation' in Norway.

At this time the ranks of Milorg were increasing in number and by mid-1944 they totalled around 32,000 spread across the south of the country. Of this total, however, about 24,000 were in eastern Norway, the area around Oslo and along the Swedish border. In comparison, for example, Milorg had only about 1100 members in the counties of Møre and Trøndelag, on the west coast around Ålesund and Trondheim. There were, therefore, still areas, particularly in the west, where SOE continued to build its own organisations and it persisted with a policy that at the time it described as a 'mid-way course between the Scylla of separation and the Charybdis of SMO [Milorg] centralisation'. Although as relations with the leadership in Oslo improved the relationship between SOE and Milorg groups across the districts strengthened and increasingly they worked together.⁹⁰ Eventually, they became indistinguishable and were no longer 'distinct'.

The uncertainty surrounding Norway's liberation, which led to a realisation in SOE that the contribution of 'local organisations' and SOE groups might not only involve support for an Allied landing but also attempts to delay the withdrawal of German forces, prevention of enemy destruction, or maintaining order before the arrival of Allied troops, also began to have an effect on the resistance movements in Norway.⁹¹ Milorg was equally aware that the country's future was unsure and in August 1943, the *Råd* sent a letter on this subject, written by Hauge, to FO. It also examined the possible contribution of the organisation during a future German evacuation, collapse, or surrender. There was concern over what might happen in the

⁸⁹ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943, with attached paper, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44', in HS2/218.

⁹⁰ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', nos. 24 & 28, January and May 1944, in SOE archive, boks 3b, mappe 10/3/8c. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 229.

⁹¹ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943, with attached paper, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44', in HS2/218.

transitional period before the arrival of Allied forces, and it was felt that in certain circumstances Milorg might act as either a protective force or a force for law and order in the potential chaotic conditions that could arise. It should, however, avoid becoming embroiled in military clashes with German forces.⁹² There were therefore signs of a convergence of views between SOE and Milorg over the eventual role of clandestine forces in Norway.

In October 1943, a further meeting to discuss this issue was held in Sweden between representatives from Milorg and FO, and in November Milorg and the civilian resistance leadership sent a joint communication to the Norwegian Prime Minister on the matter. This states that a principal objective of the *Råd* would be to create a state of military readiness in Norway that could be used by the military authorities as part of their 'operational plans' to re-occupy the country.⁹³ A consensus was therefore also developing between the resistance movements in Norway that an indigenous military force would probably be required to play a central role at the time of the country's liberation. Moreover, with an improvement in communication between FO and Milorg through the establishment of reliable radio links during the latter months of 1943, it became easier to ensure that the eventual contribution of an underground army in Norway could be closely controlled and co-ordinated with wider strategic, political, and military requirements.⁹⁴

A final conference involving Milorg and FO was held between 14 and 28 March 1944 in Sweden to discuss yet again the contribution of clandestine forces after a German capitulation, or during an evacuation or Allied invasion. By this time the Norwegian authorities and Home Front together were anxious to create 'a state of readiness' within Norway with the aim of 'preventing chaos and relieving pressure on the civilian population'. Unlike the previous May, however, little time was spent considering an invasion. It was envisaged that Milorg would act as a force for law and order, to defend Norwegian lives and property during the potentially unstable and chaotic period before the arrival of Allied forces or within newly conquered areas. It

⁹² Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 314.

⁹³ ROH, document no. 183, letter 'To the Prime Minister from the military committee, police leadership and the civil leadership, 15 November 1943', p. 331. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 314-318.

⁹⁴ NHM: 'Report on the Wireless Service between SL and UK and in Districts 11-16 and 24 and 25, from the autumn of 1943 to April 1944' by Lt. K. Haugland in SOE archive, boks 22, mappe 15/3/1. 'Operation Instructions for Curlew', 6 October 1943, in SOE archive, boks 14, mappe 13/1/8.

was no longer seen as a guerrilla force but more of a protective force.⁹⁵ SOE had no direct involvement in these negotiations as it was believed that it might commit it 'to a line of action which might not be approved' in the UK or by SHAEF.⁹⁶ Significantly, it was in London in August 1944 that agreement was finally reached on Milorg's military contribution. With the trips made by Jens Chr. Hauge to Britain during the summer and autumn of 1944, along with the integration of the staffs of FO IV and SOE's Norwegian section, a tripartite coalition was formed. It was pressure from this coalition along with Scotco that persuaded SHAEF that the resistance groups in Norway should be prepared and preserved to act as a protective force or a force for law and order within Norway in the days immediately after the liberation. It was the role that the Norwegian resistance leadership had already envisaged for Milorg, but importantly the authority and the resources in arms and equipment needed to carry it out would come from SHAEF through Special Forces HQ in London.⁹⁷

During his visit to London in the summer of 1944, Hauge also received approval for a draft paper that set out the contribution of the Milorg districts during the liberation.⁹⁸ This was the 'September Directive', which was issued by SL to the District Leaders after Hauge's return to Norway. It details the actions that *Hjemmestyrkene*, the Norwegian Home Forces (HS), as Milorg units were referred to by this time, would take in the case of a German surrender, disintegration, withdrawal, or most unlikely, an Allied landing. With the emphasis on protection and preserving law and order the document closely resembles the directive on the employment of resistance issued by SFHQ earlier in September. After Hauge's second visit to London in November 1944, the section of the document dealing with the defence of Norwegian property against demolitions, was updated and extended.⁹⁹

The long-term objective of preparing a secret army to assist in the reoccupation of Norway was coming to fruition. By the autumn of 1944 a consensus

⁹⁵ PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944', (translation), April 1944, in HS2/233.

⁹⁶ PRO: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/1349, 26 February 1944, in HS2/235.

⁹⁷ PRO: 'Minutes of the Thirty Second Meeting of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee held on Thursday, 17 August, 1944', in HS2/138, which Hauge attended. Memo from AD/X.1 to A/CD, ref. ADX/97, concerning Hauge's visit to London during November 1944 in HS6/619. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, pp. 187, 219.

⁹⁸ F. Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, (Oslo: NHM, undated), p. 20.

⁹⁹ PRO: 'Directive from the Central Leadership (SL) to the District Leadership (DS) regarding the Norwegian Home Forces (HS)', September 1944 in HS2/235. NHM: 'Directive to the District Leaders

had been reached between London and Oslo, backed by the authority of SHAEF and therefore under Allied control, on the contribution that resistance groups, especially Milorg would make to the country's liberation. There was, therefore, at this crucial stage of the occupation, complete synergy over long-term policy for Norway, which as SOE had always intended was in step with both strategic and military requirements for this theatre of operations.¹⁰⁰

The decision to develop a secret army in Norway through collaboration, however, continued to have an impact on SOE's short-term policy. The request by SOE in May 1943 for its organisations in the Oslo area to take part in overt acts of sabotage did not lead to a change in Milorg's official policy on this subject. Attacks against industrial or military targets in Norway continued to be confined to NIC (1) teams sent in from Britain, although these began to remain in the country for longer periods and increasingly used local help.¹⁰¹ The resistance leadership in Norway, both military and civilian, remained totally opposed to any form of violent armed action that could lead to severe reprisals against the civilian population and its organisations. During the latter months of 1943 and early 1944, however, in response to events both outside and inside Norway, it changed its view.

As the liberation drew nearer it was accepted in Norway that an armed and trained military force would be required in the country during the potentially unstable period immediately after a possible German surrender or withdrawal. Closely related to this it was seen as important to ensure that all actions within the country were controlled and directed, and that the Communists' active policy, which could undermine preparations for the liberation, should not be allowed to prevail. Although the British saw the Communist groups in Norway as an 'aggressive minority' without Russian backing, they also believed that they should be brought under the influence of the Home Front leadership.¹⁰² There was also the threat posed by German plans to

(DS) from Milorg's Central Leadership (SL), December 31st 1944 in SOE Archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/20.

¹⁰⁰ See Chapter two, pp. 79-80.

¹⁰¹ PRO: 'Directive for Future Sabotage Policy in Norway', from AD/E, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. ADE/20, 31 May 1943 in HS2/128. Chapter two, p. 75. See Appendix F, 'SOE Long Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway, 1940-1945, pp. 334-359.

¹⁰² ROH, document no. 183, letter 'To the Prime Minister from the military committee, police leadership and the civil leadership, 15 November 1943', p. 331. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 314-318. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 41. Hauge, Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen, pp. 193-198. PRO: letter from T. E. Bromley and P. N. Loxley, British Foreign Office, ref. N. 3257/24/G, 8 June 1944, in HS2/235. Letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to H. A. Nutting, Northern dept. of the Foreign Office, ref. JSW/1406, March 1944, in HS2/234.

mobilise the Norwegian workforce for military service on its eastern front, which the resistance leadership decided to actively resist. And there was a growing restlessness within Milorg's ranks arising out of a wish to make some immediate contribution to the Allied war effort combined with a natural hardening process within the resistance leadership in response to German threats and reprisals.¹⁰³ It was, therefore, a combination of factors linked directly to conditions in occupied Norway that eventually resulted in a change in policy by Milorg and that enabled it to co-operate with SOE on the issue of sabotage.

In November 1943 the civilian and military resistance stated in their joint communication to London, the '*Fellesbrev*', that Milorg could be used for the solution of 'operational tasks' prior to the liberation, if required.¹⁰⁴ This apparent change in policy was further crystallised in the conference held in Sweden in March 1944 between representatives of Milorg and FO, when it was agreed that 'it may become necessary for the organisations to co-operate with, or themselves put into effect, individual operations against objectives of military importance during the waiting period'.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, from May 1944, local Milorg units in co-operation with SOE teams resident in Norway, initially in attempts to disrupt the mobilisation of Norwegian workers, began to undertake overt acts of sabotage.¹⁰⁶ From this point until the liberation, Milorg and SOE, where possible, worked together and undertook a large and widespread number of attacks against key tactical sites in Norway. Therefore, by spring 1944, three years later than hoped, SOE was able to achieve its objective of carrying out sabotage within Norway using local groups and organisations. The irony was that by this stage of the war after the launch of Overlord, sabotage was no longer the priority in Norway.

Conclusion

SOE could not fulfil its plans for Norway without the support of either the Norwegian government in London or resistance groups in the country, particularly Milorg. They

¹⁰³ PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944', (translation), 14 April 1944, in HS2/233. Kraglund and Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. VI, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 136. Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 49-50.

¹⁰⁴ This letter was a response to a Communist attack against a German troop train in Mjøndalen, southwest of Oslo, on 7 October 1943. ROH, document no. 183, pp. 331. Grimnes, *Hjemmefrontens ledelse*, pp. 308-310.

¹⁰⁵ PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm, March 1944', (translation), April 1944 in HS2/233.

¹⁰⁶ A. Moland, *Kampen mot mobiliserings-trusselen i Norge 1943-44*, (Oslo: NHM, 1987), pp.20-28.

had authority or control over the important manpower reserves that SOE required to carry out its activities in this theatre. Consequently, SOE did not decide to ignore either party but from the beginning chose to work with them, although on its terms so as to ensure that special operations in Norway remained under Allied direction. In this regard, SOE was ultimately successful.

Milorg was initially another resistance organisation that SOE decided it should make use of and incorporate into its vision of a decentralised guerrilla army that would eventually be capable of supporting operations by regular forces. The difficulty was that conditions in Norway both pre-war and as a result of the nature of the occupation initially gave rise to a Milorg leadership that did not share this vision. The official recognition of Milorg also meant that SOE could no longer exercise independent control over it or completely ignore the concerns of its leadership. In the future it would have to work closely with the Norwegian military authorities if it wanted to retain any influence over its development. And in order to reinforce this relationship it accepted that parts of its policy, particularly sabotage, would have to be modified, although it was not prepared to compromise its vision of a clandestine army controlled from the UK. To accommodate its concerns toward Milorg, especially its centralised structure, SOE decided, along with FO that two distinct underground organisations should be developed within occupied Norway. But this policy was completely unsuitable for a country with such a small population. Fortunately, internal reforms within Milorg, changes in its leadership, and advances in its policy in response to events within the country and the approaching liberation ultimately not only made it more acceptable to SOE but created a synergy of views over its role that eventually enabled the two organisations to work closely.

The nature of the occupation of Norway and the consequential emergence of an organised and largely unified resistance movement that was recognised and supported by its government in London had a significant influence on the relationship between SOE and Milorg. Prior to 1943, SOE's uncompromising determination to impose its own notion of a secret army undoubtedly disrupted and complicated its long-term plans for Norway. It had to wait for Milorg to change. Ultimately this was not a major problem as it was only during the final stages of the occupation that a secret army began to have any military significance in Norway. Only then when strategic and political conditions required it was SOE able to implement its long-term

plan: to arm, equip, train and prepare a secret army that could, under Allied authority and direction, make a significant contribution to the country's liberation.

Overall the impact of SOE's relations with the Norwegian government and Milorg on its policy, although very important, was unlike strategic factors, always formative rather than fundamental. SOE's relationship with the Norwegian government and resistance was, however, not the only collaborative factor that had an impact on its policy. It also had to consider the other military organisations that operated in this theatre.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOE AND THE OTHER NEW ORGANISATIONS OPERATING IN NORWAY 1940-1945: A MILITARY ALLIANCE

Introduction

SOE's overall plan for Norway was not only shaped by strategic and political factors, but also by its ability to collaborate with the other new military organisations that were created during the war and which operated in this theatre. These included the Director of Combined Operations (DCO),¹ created in June 1940 and responsible for the planning and execution of raiding operations against the enemy coastline,² the Political Warfare Executive (PWE), which in August 1941 took over from SOE responsibility for covert 'black' propaganda in the occupied countries, and the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS), formed in June 1942 with a Special Operations department (SO) the equivalent of SOE.

This chapter will examine the relationship between SOE and these organisations in Norway, and show that at both an organisational and a local operational level it was largely successful, and beneficial to all parties. This was because they shared the same strategic objective of using a range of amphibious, irregular or subversive activities to undermine German military capability and morale. Norway was also relatively easily accessible and ideally suited for these types of military operation and therefore it was a theatre in which these organisations, often from an early stage, could take the offensive, albeit on a small scale.

Military collaboration between SOE and the other organisations active in Norway was not, however, undertaken in isolation. The involvement and interests of

¹ Combined Operations changed its title on several occasions during the war. In June 1940, Lt. General Bourne was appointed 'Commander of Raiding Operations'. Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Roger Keyes replaced Bourne in July 1940 and was given the title Director of Combined Operations (DCO). In October 1941 Captain Lord Louis Mountbatten replaced Keyes as Adviser on Combined Operations (ACO) with the rank of Commodore. To confuse matters in December 1941 the COS decided that when Mountbatten was exercising his executive functions he could use the title Commodore Combined Operations (CCO). In March 1942 Mountbatten was given the title Chief of Combined Operations (CCO), made a Vice Admiral and permitted to attend meetings of the COS Committee. In December 1943 Major-General R. E. Laycock replaced Mountbatten, and remained CCO until the end of the war. See: PRO: DEFE2/697 and 1773, 'History of the Combined Operations'.

² PRO: COS (41) 166, Directive to the Director of Combined Operations, 14 March 1941 in DEFE2/1773.

the Norwegian authorities and Milorg also had an important influence. The Norwegian military authorities supplied volunteers from their armed services, who had the necessary skills to operate in occupied Norway, as well as important economic and industrial intelligence. The government in exile, however, also used its close association with SOE to ensure that proper consideration was given to the impact of joint operations on the local population and that damage to industrial sites and therefore the Norwegian economy was minimised and contained. Its involvement therefore came at a cost.

Military collaboration had an impact on SOE policy in Norway and ultimately on its operations in several ways. It meant that attacks against economic targets in Norway could commence from a very early stage, even before SOE was in a position to undertake its own, independent activities. It also resulted in a scale of sabotage and *coup de main* activity in Norway that SOE could not have undertaken alone. Many attacks against economic or military targets were the result of a pooling of skills. The co-ordination of operations also meant that they were largely not undermined by internal squabbles, clashes in the field or duplication of effort. Disagreements over priorities were regularly negotiated to a satisfactory conclusion. Discussions over the type of target, its location, the levels of security surrounding it, invariably determined which organisation would carry out the operation. SOE's activities in Norway were part of a wider collaborative, strategic effort that was applied across Western Europe.

As the impact of collaboration was not only apparent at an organisational level but also at a local operational level, this chapter will analyse some of the many operations that SOE contributed to alongside the other organisations that were active in Norway. It will therefore mark a transition from considering the development of policy within the broader context, to showing how many of SOE's activities were the result of a blend of influences, strategic, political and collaborative. The nature of SOE's relationship with each of these organisations, however, had a somewhat different impact on its plans for Norway, and therefore the chapter will be divided into three sections to reflect this. The first will examine the relationship between SOE and Combined Operations (henceforth COHQ)³ and show that between autumn 1940 and summer 1943 they co-operated closely both organisationally and at a local operational level. Up until early 1942, SOE operations against economic and military

³ To avoid the confusion over the various titles that Combined Operations went under from 1940, this thesis will use the acronym COHQ throughout.

sites in Norway were primarily confined to its involvement in a series of amphibious raids that were planned, attempted, or carried out under the auspices or with the involvement of COHQ. And even after SOE began to carry out its own *coup de main* operations both parties continued to work closely and on occasion still combined efforts. They were ideal partners.

The second section will analyse the relationship that developed between SOE and PWE, which together recruited and trained Norwegians to undertake underground propaganda activities in Norway with the intention of both supporting Norwegian spirits and undermining German morale.

The final section of this chapter will examine the relationship between SOE and the Special Operations section (SO) of OSS. In the spring of 1943 an agreement was reached with the British and Norwegian authorities that meant that the Americans would only be able to carry out special operations in Norway with the consent of and in collaboration with SOE and FO. Therefore, OSS was a junior partner in this theatre and unable to act independently. Nevertheless, it undertook an important supportive role, providing additional transportation, resources, and on occasion specially trained teams.

I

SOE and Combined Operations in Norway: The Ideal Partnership

From the autumn of 1940 until the summer of 1943 the Scandinavian and Norwegian sections of SOE worked with COHQ in planning, preparing, and carrying out amphibious raids and *coup de main* operations in Norway. Combined Operations, like SOE, had strategic origins. As part of Britain's 'future offensive strategy' it was created in the summer of 1940 to carry out raids against the coastline of occupied Europe. The objective was to 'harass the enemy', 'cause him to disperse his forces', and 'cause material damage' from an area from the north of Norway to the West Coast of France'.⁴ In SOE's first directive, the COS affirmed the significance of raids and subversive activities as part of a 'strategy of attrition'.⁵

⁴ PRO: WP (40) 362 'Future Strategy', an appreciation by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, 4 September 1940, in CAB 66/11. COS (40) 468, 'Raiding Operations Directive to General Bourne', 17 June 1940 in DEFE2/1773.

⁵ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

Consequently, from the beginning SOE and COHQ were natural allies. By September 1940, SOE's Scandinavian section had decided that it should establish close liaison with COHQ, as it feared uncontrolled raids could lead to a premature uprising in the country.⁶ During that autumn, however, it also recognised the value of small raids against targets in northern Norway,⁷ and by December 1940 'assistance with tip-and-run landings' had become part of its immediate objective of making Norway 'a thorn in the German side'.⁸ At the same time Hugh Dalton reached an agreement with Sir Roger Keyes, the Director of Combined Operations, over responsibility for raids. It was accepted that COHQ would have authority over attacks against coastal objectives on the western seaboard of Europe using parties of fifty or more British troops that would be withdrawn later, whilst SO2 operations would be carried out by parties of not more than thirty, usually foreigners.⁹ It was also agreed that the two organisations, and SIS, should keep each other informed at an early date of projects under consideration, and should examine coastal targets 'with a view to collaboration'.¹⁰ Therefore, by the end of 1940, raids were an explicit element of Britain's forward strategy, and the two organisations, SOE and Combined Operations were both ready to work in tandem to undertake offensive operations against the enemy.

Accordingly, between September 1940 and January 1942 at least seven raids against targets close to the Norwegian coast were planned, attempted, or completed, and SOE and COHQ collaborated on five of them.¹¹ The main objective of these operations was to further the pressure on Germany and thereby help to weaken its military capability. They were the continuance of an economic interest in Norway that had begun during the First World War, when for example Britain had gone as far

⁶ PRO: paper entitled 'Norway', 1 September 1940, in HS2/240.

⁷ PRO: paper entitled 'Winter Policy for Norway', by F. Stagg, 25 November 1940 in HS2/128.

⁸ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, in HS2/128.

⁹ PRO: paper entitled 'Raiding Parties: Relationship between DCO & SO2', ref. pa/xx/95, 14 December 1940 in HS8/818. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 94, 361.

¹⁰ Initially, until February 1941, Commander Fletcher, who had been a member of the Guerrilla Warfare Committee, was the DCO liaison officer with SOE. Later in 1941, Major D.A. Wyatt (L/PW) was appointed SOE's liaison officer with COHQ. He retained this position until his death in the Dieppe raid in August 1942. See: PRO: minutes of 42nd Meeting held at DCO's office at 15.30 hrs, 16 December 1940 in HS8/818.

¹¹ The raids were: 'Mandible' (formerly 'Castle'), 'Claymore', 'Hemisphere', 'Kitbag I', 'Archery', 'Anklet', and 'Kitbag II'. For details see, Appendix E, 'Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

as to purchase seventy to eighty percent of one year's catch of fish in the country.¹² This interest was resumed prior to the outbreak of conflict in 1939,¹³ and continued right through to the summer of 1940 when SOE highlighted herring oil production and the mining of specialist metals as important targets.¹⁴ Nevertheless, these raids also had other important benefits. They heightened the fear of a British invasion, which induced Germany to increase its military commitment in Norway, and led to the capture of some important cipher equipment, which helped in the breaking of the German Enigma codes and thereby contributed to the Allied victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

By October 1940, COHQ had begun to consider an operation against ilmenite production at Titania A/S near Sokndal just six kilometres from Jøssingfjord in southern Norway. It was believed that an attack against this target would, apart from denying Germany a significant although not vital war material, also give the organisation some practical experience in raiding operations, raise Norwegian morale, and generally annoy and create alarm amongst the Germans.¹⁵ Preparations therefore began for Operation Mandible (formerly 'Castle'), a planned attack against the hydroelectric power station and loading appliances for ilmenite at the head of Jøssingfjord. It would be a joint operation, with SOE providing Norwegian guides, COHQ supplying Special Service troops to carry out the 'tip and run' raid, and the Royal Navy (RN) making three destroyers and a submarine available.¹⁶ It is significant because it serves as an early example of the series of amphibious raids that were undertaken along the Norwegian seaboard during 1941. They targeted economic sites that were easily accessible and were at the time one of the few ways that Britain could take the offensive. On this occasion, however, although the COS and the

¹² Olav Riste, *The Neutral Ally – Norway's Relations with Belligerent Powers in the First World War*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1965), p. 98.

¹³ PRO: document of the Industrial Intelligence Centre (IIC) entitled 'German Import Trade', ref. ICF/265, 20 December 1938 in FO837/427. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 118.

¹⁴ Between September 1939 and March 1940, there were ongoing negotiations on a war trade agreement between the British and Norwegian governments. Medlicott, *The Economic Blockade*, vol. I, pp. 153, 158-159. PRO: minutes of the second meeting of the Special Operations Board of Directors held on 10 September 1940 in HS8/194. PRO: memo to D/G Mouse (Lt, J. Chaworth-Musters) from D/C, 20 August 1940, in HS2/201.

¹⁵ PRO: letter from S (Charles Hambro) to S1 (F. Stagg) and S2, 21 December 1940, in HS2/201. Operation instructions for Operation Castle in DEFE2/353.

¹⁶ Initially Munthe was asked to recruit local resistance groups to assist the operation, but after a change of heart it was decided to use Norwegians recruited locally in London. PRO: a summary of Operation Castle, 27 December 1940 in DEFE2/353. Letter from S (Charles Hambro) to SZ (Harry Sporborg), S1 (Frank Stagg), and telegrams from Charles Hambro to 4301 (Malcolm Munthe) in Stockholm, 21 and 28 December 1940 respectively, in HS2/201.

Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet approved 'Mandible' they were overruled by Churchill, who at the time objected to disturbing the Norwegian coastline for objects he considered 'trivial'.¹⁷ Churchill's attitude caused frustration within SOE but it did not initially hinder preparations for further similar operations. The target changed, however, to the supply of Norwegian fish products to Germany. In the spring of 1941 three operations, against the Norwegian herring, cod oil, and fish industry – 'Claymore', 'Hemisphere', and 'Almoner' - were proposed, which indicates the importance that the British and SOE placed on this product at the time. There was an initial belief that fish oil was used in the manufacture of glycerine for explosives, but by early January 1941 this had been discarded although it was still believed to be an important source of vitamins 'A' and 'B' for Germany, and the country's 'most important deficiency foodstuff'.¹⁸

Operation Claymore, the raid against the Lofoten Islands off the northwest coast of northern Norway in early March 1941 requires brief consideration, not only because it was another important example of collaboration between SOE and COHQ, but also because it has attracted significant interest amongst historians. Churchill was against this operation and his opposition was only overcome after the COS persuaded him that because it was not against a target on the mainland it was less likely to stir up the Norwegian coastline.¹⁹ There have also been claims that the operation's main objective, unknown to SOE, was to capture German cipher material.²⁰ It was, however, another offensive strategic operation against an economic target, the herring and cod oil industry, but also with the intention of destroying German garrisons and

¹⁷ It was approved at COS (40) 438th meeting, 27 December 1940, and by the C in C Home Fleet on 2 January 1941. Martin Gilbert claims, incorrectly, that Churchill never overruled the COS. See: PRO: DEFE2/201, and a note to the Prime Minister from H.L. Ismay, 17 January 1941, in PREM3/328/11A. M. Gilbert, *Finest Hour: Winston Churchill 1939-1941*, (London: Heinemann, 1983), p. 325.

¹⁸ For details see, Appendix E, 'Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333. PRO: letter from Hugh Dalton to W.S. Churchill, ref. SC/1589/6, in CAB121/447. Hand-written appreciation by the DDCO, 10 January 1941, in DEFE2/141.

¹⁹ Churchill eventually approved the operation on 27 January 1941. PRO: letter from L.C. Hollis (secretary to COS Committee) to W. Churchill, 21 January 1941, letter from Churchill to General Ismay and COS Committee, 22 January 1941, and a further letter from L.C. Hollis to Churchill, 27 January 1941, in PREM3/328/7. See chapter two, p. 66, footnote no. 37.

²⁰ This assertion seems to be based on the claim of Edward Thomas, who worked in the Naval Intelligence Division during the Second World War. None of the authors quote documentary evidence to support their claim. E. Thomas, 'Norway's role in British wartime Intelligence', in Salmon, (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, p. 123. Stafford, *Churchill & Secret Service*, p. 244. Sebag-Montefiore, *Enigma*, p. 132. Rolf Dahlø, *Skjebnetræder: En historie om de ukjente krigerne*, (Oslo: Schibsted Forlag, 2001), p. 136.

bringing back Norwegian volunteers.²¹ Its primary aim was to deny Germany what at the time was considered a significant war material; something championed by SOE from the summer and through the early winter of 1940.²² It was, therefore, pressure from SOE that led to 'Claymore'. Planning began under the direction of COHQ in consultation with SOE in late 1940, and this eventually ended in a combined operation involving SOE, Special Service troops, the Royal Navy, and Norwegian men, officers, guides and naval pilots. It was carried out on 4 March 1941, and resulted in the destruction of factories, shipping, and oil tanks, and the important but largely fortuitous capture of German cipher material.²³ It is unlikely that an operation involving five naval destroyers, 500 commandoes from the Special Service Brigade, and over fifty Norwegians, would be undertaken in the hope that some enemy cipher equipment might be captured. It seems more likely that the Admiralty decided that if during the operation an opportunity arose to board an enemy vessel and search for this material, it should be taken. To the RN and Naval Intelligence such an action would have been of major importance in light of its campaign against the German U-boats operating in the North Atlantic. This is, however, conjecture, as there does not appear to be anything in not only SOE files, but also Combined Operations files, Royal Naval files, or the Prime Ministers files that provides an unequivocal answer to this issue.

'Claymore' shows how important collaboration with COHQ was to SOE at a time when it did not have the capability to undertake its own, independent activities. Moreover, it was a small operation that ironically, despite the assurances of the COS, stirred-up the Norwegian coast and led 'to reinforcements of German forces on the peninsula'.²⁴ For that reason, despite leading to reprisals against the local

²¹ PRO: appreciation written by the DDCO, 10 January 1941, in DEFE2/141. Minutes of a meeting held at DCO's office, 27 January 1941 to discuss Operation Claymore in HS2/224.

²² PRO: paper entitled 'A Winter Policy for Norway' by S1 (Frank Stagg), 25 November 1940, in HS2/128. Letter from Hugh Dalton to Winston Churchill, ref. Sc/1589/6, 17 January 1941, in CAB 121/447. NHM: A series of papers produced by Stagg on proposed operations in northern Norway, in SOE archives, Boks 1, mappe 10/3.

²³ Both Hugh Sebag-Montefiore and David Kahn, through interviewing participants in the raid, show that the capture of the German cipher material from the Krebs was fortuitous. PRO: report by Brigadier J. C. Haydon, consolidated results of Operation Claymore, 4 March 1941, in DEFE2/140. Letter from Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg to Capt. J. Knox, 3 January 1941, in DEFE2/141. Sebag-Montefiore, *Enigma*, pp. 132-136 and D. Kahn, *Seizing the Enigma*, (London: Arrow, 1996), pp. 127-136.

²⁴ Hugh Sebag-Montefiore claims that Churchill wanted more troops diverted to Norway and that therefore Claymore was a diversionary raid. What it was a diversion for is not stated. The COS actually assured Churchill that this operation would not lead to reinforcements in Norway. See: PRO: letter from L.C. Hollis, to Churchill, 27 January 1941, in Premier/3/328/7. Sebag-Montefiore, *Enigma*, p. 132.

population,²⁵ it was a small but significant strategic success. On 26 March 1941, as a direct consequence of 'Claymore', Hitler issued a directive that led to a 'substantial flow of reinforcements' to the country, plans to construct 160 coastal batteries, and instructions to build training camps in Norway so that a defence reserve could be built up. It also confirmed Hitler's view that the British would attempt a landing in the country.²⁶ As the operation included a significant Norwegian military contribution and, as far as SOE was concerned, it had the 'enthusiastic' support of its Foreign Minister, it was also a truly joint operation.²⁷

Despite the relative success of 'Claymore' no more raids were carried out in this theatre before December 1941. The reason was a combination of Churchill's opposition to small operations along the Norwegian coast,²⁸ and the diversion of COHQ resources to Operation Pilgrim, the proposed seizure of the Canaries, which was the organisation's main preoccupation during the first half of 1941.²⁹ After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, however, which included an advance by Axis forces from the north of Norway into Finland, the strategic context changed. The Prime Minister's eagerness to support the Soviet Union through the creation of a Second Front in Western Europe intensified interest in Norway, but after the COS had successfully resisted Operation Ajax,³⁰ a myriad of smaller plans emerged. These set out to establish a temporary military presence in the north of Norway, to cut German land and sea communications with its forces in the north of the country, and to attack economic and military targets.³¹ They eventually

²⁵ Almost 100 Norwegians were arrested, and the houses of those that fled to Britain were burnt down. Nøkleby, 'Nyordning', vol. II, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 167. Dahlø, *Skjebnetræder*, p. 135.

²⁶ Nøkleby, 'Nyordning', vol. II, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, p. 163. OKW/KIB I/346 and 247 (entries of 6 and 8 May 1941), and OKW/KTB 2/1007 sq., cited in K. J. Muller, 'A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations in the Second World War', *Intelligence and National Security*, vol. 2, July 1987, p. 317. Report by the C-in-C., Navy, to the Fuehrer on March 18, 1941, cited in *Fuehrer Conferences on Naval affairs 1939-1945*, p. 183.

²⁷ According to Hambro, Trygve Lie was 'more than ready to support a direct attack on the German fish supplies from Norway', provided there was no damage to the fisherman's property. The Norwegian Prime Minister also received the expedition when it returned to Britain. PRO: answer to a series of questions from DCO on Operation Claymore, provided by SO2, 3 February 1941, in HS2/224. 'Enclosure no. 9', including 'Note from Mr C. Hambro', dated 6 January 1941, in HS8/306. Riste, *London regjeringa*, p. 118.

²⁸ PRO: paper entitled, 'Scandinavian Policy', 16 April 1940, in HS2/10.

²⁹ PRO: file DEFE2/697. Mann, *British Policy*, p. 103.

³⁰ See chapter two p. 64.

³¹ The COS gave instructions to plan and execute a series of small raids and one large raid in the order of 700-800 men. The aim of the large raid was to cause losses to German forces and equipment. Two plans were originally considered: 'Ascot', which aimed to cut German communications between southern and northern Norway and eventually became 'Anklet', and 'Stumper' a raid against Tarva outside Trondheim that evolved into 'Kitbag' and 'Archery'. 'Thresher' a series of small raids along

crystallised into four operations, ‘Anklet’, ‘Archery’, and ‘Kitbag’ I & II, which were carried out in December 1941 and January 1942 with varying degrees of success. All were under the supreme command of the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet and included contributions from SOE, the RN, RAF, the Norwegian armed forces, and COHQ. They were, therefore, a further indication of a willingness within the British armed forces, SOE and COHQ to collaborate on strategic operations against targets along the Norwegian seaboard.³² SOE, in consultation with COHQ, supplied Norwegian volunteers including local guides, naval pilots, and radio operators.³³ It also made a direct contribution through its own operation called ‘Wallah’, a plan conceived in the spring of 1941 to paralyse German sea-borne traffic along the Norwegian coast during the following winter and which was the original basis for and eventually became part of ‘Anklet’.³⁴ It was also intended that another SOE operation called ‘Archer’, a plan to use a team of men to attack ferries, an aerodrome, and a major bridge around Mosjøen, would be part of the Lofoten operation. After the scaling-back of Anklet it was, however, never required.³⁵

SOE’s co-operation with COHQ during 1941 not only resulted in their joint operations acquiring the prefix ‘Knottgrass’,³⁶ but it also enabled the organisation to pursue its short-term aim of attacking enemy targets in Norway at a time when it was largely incapable of acting alone. And although individually each raid achieved relatively little,³⁷ altogether they represented one small way in which Britain could take the offensive at a time when it lacked the resources or ability to undertake large-scale land operations.³⁸ Furthermore, a series of pinpricks, such as these raids, can quickly become a major irritation, especially in a sensitive area, which Norway was to Hitler.

the Norwegian coast was eventually dropped. PRO: COS (41) 240 (0), ‘Raids on the Coast of Norway’, directive to C-in-C Home Fleet, C-in-C Home Forces, and the Adviser on Combined Operations (ACO), 24 October 1941, cited in DEFE2/80. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 142-150.

³² For details see, Appendix E, ‘Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945’, pp. 328-333.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ PRO: ‘Operation Instructions no. 1 for Archer’, December 1941, in HS2/147.

³⁶ ‘Anklet’ was given the name ‘Knottgrass-Butter’; ‘Kitbag’ became ‘Knottgrass-Bread’; ‘Archery’ became ‘Knottgrass-Salt’. See: PRO: SOE Weekly progress reports, week commencing 17 December 1941, in HS8/219.

³⁷ Mann, *British Policy*, p. 123.

³⁸ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), ‘Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy’, 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

In January 1942, the COS pointed out that raids had a ‘considerable moral effect and forced the Germans to keep more land and air forces in Norway than would otherwise have been the case’.³⁹ In response to ‘Anklet’ and ‘Archery’ the number of German troops stationed in the country was increased from 100,000 to 250,000, new fortifications built and a large part of the Germany surface fleet moved to Norwegian waters.⁴⁰ This was a large military commitment in a peripheral theatre and therefore there is considerable merit in the assertion that there ‘was no need for Allied deception operations to persuade Hitler to reinforce his troops’, in Norway.⁴¹ More significantly this meant that there was a sound strategic reason for continuing raids and *coup de main* operations, especially if they could be undertaken with only a small cost in men and equipment,⁴² which is ultimately what happened. The German reinforcement of Norway especially the expansion of its air cover and the arrival of the battleship *Tirpitz*, meant that large-scale British raids involving hundreds of Special Service troops and the employment of capital ships from an over-stretched RN were abandoned. After a gap of a few months, however, they were replaced by smaller sea-borne raids or by *coup de main* operations against inland targets.⁴³ The basis of these activities also did not change and important economic and military targets particularly the specialist ores and metals that were mined or produced in Norway remained the priority.

Despite the productive working relationship between SOE and COHQ during 1941, Lt. Colonel Wilson wrote that in the following year Combined Operations was ‘inclined to usurp SOE’s function of *coup-de-main* activities in Norway’.⁴⁴ A total of five such operations were carried out during 1942, two organised by COHQ with SOE

³⁹ PRO: COS (42) 31st Meeting, 28 January 1942, ‘Raids on Norway’, in CAB79/17.

⁴⁰ KTB der OKW 1942, vol. I, pp. 124-125, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 210. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 131-132. *Fuehrer Conferences on Naval Affairs 1939-1945*, pp. 246-249, 257, 259-262.

⁴¹ Muller, ‘A German Perspective on Allied deception Operations in the Second World War’, p. 317.

⁴² PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), ‘Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy’, 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

⁴³ In February 1942, the Adviser on Combined Operations, Mountbatten, proposed two major raids on the Norwegian coast: ‘Audacity’ an attack on Ålesund with 1500 commandoes, and ‘Centaur’, an attack on the Glomfjord factory in northern Norway using 500-700 commandoes. Both were rejected, ‘Audacity’ was called off because of the strength of the German Air Force (GAF), and attempts to resurrect it again at the end of 1942 were rejected due to opposition from the C-in-C Home Fleet. See: PRO: COS (42) 35 (0), 7 February 1942, COS (42) 482 (0), 27 December 1942, COS (42) 360th meeting 30 December 1942, all cited in CAB121/445. Mann, *British Policy*, p. 164.

⁴⁴ PRO: HS7/174, SOE’s Norwegian Section History.

involvement, and three by SOE.⁴⁵ Wilson's claim is therefore difficult to understand. Nonetheless, from early 1942, both organisations operated independently and this inevitably led to some rivalry. At a local operational and organisational level, however, co-operation continued, and many of the *coup de main* operations in Norway in 1942 and 1943 were joint efforts involving not only COHQ but also the Norwegian military authorities. From early 1942, through better relations with SOE and with the creation of FO, the Norwegian government became more closely and formally involved in British operations against targets on its territory. Its participation was largely advantageous and supportive and was backed up by the good relationship that developed between Lord Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations (CCO) from March 1942 and General Hansteen, the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it also meant that the Norwegian government endeavoured to use its increasing involvement in order to minimise what it considered to be unnecessary long-term damage to the Norwegian economy and the risks to the local population. By early 1942, it had already ensured despite objections from the MEW, that herring oil production in Norway was no longer an Allied target.⁴⁷

SOE, assisted by the Norwegian military authorities, was involved in and contributed to four *coup de main* operations brought together by COHQ between the summer of 1942 and the end of the winter of 1943 against economic targets in Norway. Altogether they evince how relevant collaboration with COHQ and FO was to both the nature of many operations in this theatre and to the fulfilment of SOE's objectives, particularly at a time when its priority was to promote economic and industrial dislocation across Europe. The first in September 1942, Operation Musketoorn, referred to as 'Knottgrass-Unicorn' in SOE files, was against the Glomfjord power station, which supplied energy to the aluminium smelting factory at Haugvik in northwest Norway. SOE provided Norwegian guides from NIC (1),

⁴⁵ Operation Musketoorn and Operation Freshman were the two COHQ led operations. Operations Redshank, Kestral, and Marshfield were SOE led. For details of the SOE operations see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', p. 324.

⁴⁶ Mountbatten met General Hansteen toward the end of February 1942 to discuss the issue of raids in Norway and 'took the most tremendous liking to him'. From this point there are several occasions when Hansteen and Mountbatten corresponded directly regarding raids or *coup de main* operations in Norway. PRO: letter from Louis Mountbatten to Charles Hambro, ref. Q.320/460, 5 March 1942 in HS2/127.

⁴⁷ PRO: letter from Trygve Lie to Charles Hambro, 17 December 1941, and letter from the MEW to A. H. B. Schofield at the Foreign Office regarding Herring Oil factories, 8 January 1942, in FO371/32827.

training, intelligence, and specialist equipment.⁴⁸ The operation was successfully carried out and made a small but valuable contribution to the failure of Germany's ambitious plans for aluminium production in Norway.⁴⁹

In January 1943 another operation, 'Cartoon', assembled by COHQ, but under the command of ACOS was undertaken to disrupt the mining of pyrites at Lillebø on the island of Stord, south of Bergen. SOE initially suggested the operation and in co-operation with FO, which approved it, again provided intelligence and a Norwegian guide. The Norwegian authorities were, however, concerned about possible reprisals against the local population, and therefore widened the role of their guide to include protection of Norwegian interests and forbade the Norwegian commandoes that took part from wearing the national flag on their uniform.⁵⁰ Significant damage was done to the mining and transportation equipment and even by summer 1945 production at the site had only reached a third of its original level of about 150,000 tons per year.⁵¹

In February 1943, SOE and CCO also attempted to link operations against economic and military targets in southern Norway. At the beginning of January 1943, SOE and Norwegian naval operation 'Carhampton' sailed with the aim of capturing a transport convoy off the coast of southern Norway thereby disrupting the transportation of important war materials to Germany. This ambitious project eventually failed in its objective, and the party sent in to undertake it withdrew to the mountains.⁵² In early February it was decided to combine this operation with the COHQ operation 'Yorker', a planned attack against the titanium mines at Sandboek also in southern Norway, which were of major significance to German armament

⁴⁸ Two officers and eight other ranks from no. 2 Commando undertook this operation, which initially was called 'Centaur'. It also included two Norwegians from NICI (1), Sergeant Magnus Erling Djuptredt and Corporal Sverre Grunland. Seven of the Britains and one Norwegian, Djuptredt, were captured, whilst four men escaped to Sweden. At the time it was estimated the plant had a capacity to produce 5-9000 tons per annum and was being expanded. See: PRO: DEFE2/364 & 5 and NHM: FOIV archive, boks 56, mappe 17-C-2, 'Knotgrass/Unicorn'.

⁴⁹ A. S. Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, (Oxford: OUP, 1972), p. 264. H. Paulsen, 'Tysk økonomisk politikk i Norge 1940-1945', in Dahl (ed.), *Krigen i Norge*, p. 84.

⁵⁰ The Norwegian guide was Lieutenant Welle-Strand, and a local man supplied intelligence. The raid also included men from D troop of 12 Commando and Norwegians from no 10 (Inter Allied) Commando. They were carried and escorted by Motor Torpedo boats (MTBs) from the 30th Royal Norwegian Navy (RNorN) MTB flotilla. See: PRO: DEFE2/122, Operation Cartoon, and NHM: FO IV archive, boks 56, mappe 17-C-6, 'Cartoon/Barter'.

⁵¹ PRO: paper entitled 'Attack on the Pyrite Mines etc. on Stord Island in Southern Norway on the night of 23/24 January 1943', in DEFE2/122. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 215.

⁵² PRO: at the time it was estimated that 800,000 tons of important war material was transported annually by sea along the Norwegian coast on its way to Germany. For details see: PRO: a note with enclosed report from Ottar Grundvig to Mr Hysing Olsen in Notraship, to D/CD (Charles Hambro) from the Ministry of War Transport, 1 April 1942, in HS2/180. Appendix E, 'Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

production. Yorker was never carried out due to continual severe weather in the North Sea and the Carhampton team was eventually forced to make its own way back from Norway, which ended in tragedy for a large part of the expedition.⁵³

Collaboration with COHQ, supported by the Norwegian authorities enabled SOE to widen and intensify its foremost aim, which in 1942 and 1943 was to use 'every present means' to harass the enemy and damage his war effort.⁵⁴ These operations were still only 'pin-pricks' but altogether they had a significant strategic payback, disrupting the production and supply of important war materials and more importantly fostering German fears over British intentions toward Norway. As a result of 'Cartoon' coastal artillery in Norway was reinforced and Hitler himself intervened. It was eventually decided that a mobile reserve should be built up, additional troops sent, and more artillery and small vessels allotted to the Norwegian Command.⁵⁵

Collaboration between SOE and COHQ was also directed against what at the time was considered as one of the most important military targets of the war. This was Operation Freshman, the attempt to halt the production of heavy water at the Norsk Hydro plant at Vemork in southern Norway. This substance, a by-product of the electrolysis of water, a process undertaken to produce hydrogen and oxygen for use in the local production of nitrate fertilisers, was potentially an important constituent in German attempts to develop an atomic bomb.⁵⁶ Consequently, a great deal has been written about the detail of this operation and therefore will not be repeated.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, it raises a number of important issues concerning SOE interest and involvement in Norway that are relevant to this thesis.

⁵³ It was estimated that this mine produced between 150 and 200, 000 tons of raw ore, as well as ilmenite and magnetite concentrate. On 25 February the operation was cancelled. For details see: PRO: memo to COS to ACOS from Colonel R. M. Neville CCO, 4 February 1943, in DEFE2/627. Appendix E, 'Sea Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945, pp. 328-333.

⁵⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'The Re-Conquest of Norway: SOE's Role', 6 April 1942, in HS2/218.

⁵⁵ OKW/KTB 5/79, and OKW/KTB 5 129, cited in Muller, 'A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations in the Second World War', p. 319.

⁵⁶ Heavy water, which has the technical name of deuterium oxide, is 10% heavier than normal water. It was used to moderate the speed of neutrons set free in a nuclear reactor, allowing them to split uranium atoms in a controlled chain reaction, thereby producing plutonium, a fissionable element that could be used in a bomb. See: P. F. Dahl, *Heavy Water and the Wartime Race for Nuclear Energy*, (Bristol: IOP Publishing, 1999), pp. 24-27. PRO: 'Appendix A to SX's memorandum on "Clairvoyant"', 20 December 1941, attached to a note headed 'Lurgan', 30 July 1942, in HS2/184.

⁵⁷ These are all detailed narratives of the operation, but provide little or scanty references to SOE involvement. The exception is Poulsson's recollections. He was leader of SOE's 'Grouse' reception team that was sent in to receive the Freshman operation. R. Wiggan, *Operation Freshman*, (London:

SOE was aware of heavy water production in Norway from as early as August 1940⁵⁸ and targeted it in 1941 as part of Operation Clairvoyant, its ambitious plan to ‘immobilise’ important industries in southern Norway through attacking local hydroelectric power stations. It was, however, decided that the plant that supplied the power for production at Vemork, which consisted of ten generators was too big for a SOE team and therefore bombing was recommended. Unfortunately, Norwegian concerns eventually resulted in the abandonment of an air operation.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, this focus on attacking the local power plant, a relatively large target, is crucial in understanding ‘Freshman’.

In the spring of 1942, in response to intelligence coming out of Norway, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), which was part of the Directorate of Tube Alloys the organisation responsible for Britain’s atomic bomb project, became concerned over production levels of heavy water at Vemork and contacted SOE.⁶⁰ The significance of the involvement of DSIR is that from this point disquiet over heavy water production in Norway circulated within much higher levels in government and was no longer confined to SOE.⁶¹ It was, however, again made clear that the best way to interrupt production was to target the power station. Owing to its size this would, however, in the absence of bombing, require a ‘combined operation’.⁶² In other words, SOE continued to believe at this point that the target was too large for it to take on alone and it required collaboration. Out of this came Operation Freshman, a joint effort to interrupt heavy water production at Vemork by putting the local power plant out of action and destroying ancillary equipment and

William Kimber, 1986). Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 172-180. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*, pp. 52-67.

D.F. Cooper R.E, ‘Operation Freshman’, *Royal Engineers Journal*, vol. LX, March 1946: pp. 31-38.

⁵⁸ The Ministry of Supply wanted details of the electrolytic production of heavy water. PRO: letter from Mr. A. Webster, (Ministry of Supply) to Lt. J. Chaworth-Musters, ref. DSR/BM/910, 10 August 1940, in HS2/238.

⁵⁹ PRO: letter to Air Vice Marshal C.E.H. Medhurst, from SOE, ref. FN/NO/536, 2 January 1942, including paper entitled, ‘Clairvoyant’, 1 January 1942 in HS2/218. NHM: ‘Consolidated Progress reports of S Section’, weeks-ending 27 January and 10 February 1942 in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

⁶⁰ PRO: letter from H. J. Phelps, Enemy Resources dept. at the MEW, to M. W. Perrin (DSIR), 29 March 1942, in HS8/955. Howard, ‘Grand Strategy’, vol. IV in Butler (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, p. 586.

⁶¹ Britain’s atomic bomb project was set up on Churchill’s instructions and ministerial responsibility was entrusted to Sir John Anderson. Howard, ‘Grand Strategy’, vol. IV in Butler (ed.), *History of the Second World War*, p. 586.

⁶² PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. Wilson), to DSIR, 7 May 1942 in HS2/184.

stocks. It was co-ordinated by COHQ, and included contributions from the 1st Airborne Division, No 38 Wing of the RAF, SOE, and FO.⁶³

SOE provided training for the Royal Engineers who were chosen to undertake the demolition of the power station,⁶⁴ and FO supplied important intelligence on the site. Leif Tronstad, who had helped set up the plant in the 1930s was in contact with Jomar Brun, its Chief Engineer, who up to autumn 1942, when he fled to Britain, sent back a flow of information, including building plans, details on production levels, and samples of heavy water.⁶⁵ The hydroelectric plant at Vemork, however, was part of a network of power stations in the area that supplied sixty percent of the electricity requirements for eastern Norway.⁶⁶ It therefore had huge economic significance for the local population and the involvement of the Norwegian military authorities provided them with an opportunity to voice their concerns. Consequently, it was eventually agreed that of the ten generators at the power plant only eight would be put out of action, leaving two intact to provide at least enough energy for the production of fertilisers at the Norsk Hydro plant at Rjukan further down the valley. This would mean that phosphate supplies to local farmers could continue.⁶⁷

SOE and FO also made available a NIC (1) team, 'Grouse', which was given the task of receiving the party of engineers and guiding them to the target. On 28 March 1942, Einar Skinnerland had been parachuted into Norway to prepare the way for this operation, which was to follow at the end of April and organise small local guerrilla groups around the strategically important Vestfjord valley, where Vemork is located.⁶⁸ Air transport, however, was not available before the lighter nights set in during May and therefore 'Grouse' was delayed. It was only in September when planning for 'Freshman' was under way that the decision was made to use 'Grouse' as

⁶³ COS approved 'Freshman' in principle in October and 'invited the Chief of Combined Operations' in consultation with the Air Staff, the GOC Airborne Division, and the Ministry of Aircraft Production to make recommendations. PRO: COS (42) 292nd meeting, 19 October 1942, cited in DEFE2/219.

⁶⁴ It was eventually decided, after considering a number of options, to carry out the operation using gliders towed to close to the target. Consequently, the RAF was directly involved in the operation through no. 38 Wing. The Royal Engineers were given a short but intensive training by SOE in demolition and survival. PRO: letter from Major Nicholls (MO1-SP) to Lt. Col. Henniker, Air Borne Division, ref. D/CCO/658, 27 October 1942, in DEFE2/ 219. HQ, No 38 Wing, RAF, Operation Order No 5, ref. 38W/MS 10/15/AIR, 16 November 1942, in DEFE2/224.

⁶⁵ Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork 1940-1945*, pp. 28-35.

⁶⁶ Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, p. 13-14.

⁶⁷ PRO: letter to LT. Col. M. C. A. Henniker, CRE Airborne Division, ref. SR1149/42, 16 November 1942 in DEFE2/219.

⁶⁸ Vestfjord links Østlandet (eastern Norway) and Vestlandet (western Norway).

a forward party.⁶⁹ The men were dropped into Norway in October, although unfortunately, after the two gliders carrying the engineers crashed effectively ending the operation, their support was never required. On 23 November, therefore, for security reasons, the 'Grouse' party was renamed 'Swallow'.⁷⁰ 'Freshman' was a joint operation against potentially the most important war material produced in Norway. It was, however, the initial conviction that the only way to stop production was by destroying the power station, a target too large for a SOE team, which determined that it would be a combined operation. 'Freshman' was also significant not only because of the target, but also because of what it symbolises. It highlights how strategic, political and collaborative factors came together to shape special operations carried out in this theatre.

Co-operation at a local operational level during 1942 and 1943 was also assisted by organisational collaboration between SOE and COHQ through the exchange of target lists, discussions over target priority and by a general effort to co-ordinate activities in Norway. Both organisations, however, increasingly planned their own independent operations and therefore a degree of competition inevitably broke out. All of this is illustrated by the conflict that ensued over whether the combined operation 'Musketoon' or Operation Seagull, SOE's proposal to attack the Sulitjelma mines in northern Norway around the same time and which were only seventy miles from Glomfjord, should have priority. In the end, however, after lengthy discussions it was decided that both operations would go ahead, although 'Seagull' was eventually and rather ironically cancelled due to the increase in security in the area that was a result of the attack against the Glomfjord power plant.⁷¹

⁶⁹ It appears that in an appreciation produced on 15 September 1942, SOE suggested using 'Grouse' as a forward party. The original instructions for 'Grouse' in March and August 1942 make no mention of an operation against heavy water. PRO: paper entitled 'SOE Operation "Gunnerside"' (undated but probably March 1943), in HS2/190. NHM: Operation Grouse I, 28 March 1942, and Operation Instructions for Grouse II, 31 August 1942, in SOE archive, Boks 22, mappe 16/1/1.

⁷⁰ Two gliders, towed by British aircraft, attempted to deliver thirty Royal Engineers to a rendezvous point in southern Norway. Both gliders and one of the aircraft crashed and all the Royal Engineers were eventually killed either as a result of the crash or at the hands of the Germans. One of the aircraft returned home. See: PRO: communication to the Prime Minister from CCO (Lord L. Mountbatten) by telephone, 22 November 1942, in DEFE2/ 219, and note to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) from D/CE, ref. DCE/NV/1850, 23 November 1942, in HS2/172. R. Wiggan, *Operation Freshman*, p. 97.

⁷¹ PRO: letter from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Harry Sporborg) from D/CCO, 4 February 1942, suggesting a list of targets in Norway. Minutes of a meeting held on 22 August to discuss the co-ordination of COHQ and SOE attacks on targets in Norway. Memo from CD (Sir Charles Hambro), ref. CD/OR/2877, 5 September 1942 advising Directors and Section Heads to liaise directly with their counterparts at CCO, all in HS2/226. For details of 'Seagull' see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 190-1945', p.324.

Furthermore, after the Prime Minister's call in October 1942 for an intensification of 'small-scale raids' by COHQ,⁷² Norway became an increasingly popular choice for small sea-borne operations. With several Allied organisations operating along the Norwegian coast it therefore became increasingly necessary to co-ordinate and prioritise their activities. Consequently, in November 1942 the Admiralty appointed ACOS, Vice-Admiral L.V. Wells as the 'co-ordinating authority for small operations on the Norwegian coast'.⁷³ In January 1943, the COS stamped their seal of authority on this decision when they confirmed that all planning of clandestine sea-borne operations, whether originated by SOE, SIS or CCO, would be overseen by the 'Admiralty or a Flag Officer delegated by them'.⁷⁴ These activities, with the agreement of SOE, were also prioritised, with intelligence on the German fleet at the top, followed by interference with the enemy's communications along the coast, operations that extended the enemy's defensive efforts, and lastly the building of resistance.⁷⁵

It was within this framework that during the winter and spring 1943 COHQ continued to consult with SOE on its proposals for Norway, even though Operation Cartoon was the last operation on which they directly co-operated.⁷⁶ SOE was not reluctant to raise objections if it was felt that they directly interfered with its own operations. It opposed Operation Pullover, a plan to destroy the Nordals Viaduct near Narvik in an attempt to interdict the transportation of Swedish iron ore. It argued that the loss of supplies to Germany would be relatively small, as it involved a landing in Norway it would undermine its efforts in the area, and because Special Duty aircraft would be used other SOE missions could be delayed. The operation was, however, eventually cancelled due to 'lack of suitable weather'.⁷⁷ SOE also objected to Operation Cobblestones, a plan to leave parties of No. 14 Commando on islands off the Norwegian coast from where, by using kayaks or canoes to attach limpet mines, they could attack enemy shipping. Again SOE felt that this would disturb the local

⁷² PRO: COS (42) 146th meeting (0), 13 October 1942, cited in a paper entitled, 'Small Scale Raiding', 16 December 1942 in HS2/10.

⁷³ PRO: letter from the Admiralty to ACOS, the C-in-C Rosyth, CCO, and the Admiral (Submarines), ref. M/P.D. 0188/42, 4 November 1942 in DEFE2/616.

⁷⁴ PRO: COS (43) 3rd meeting (0), 4 January 1943, in CAB 70/59.

⁷⁵ PRO: minutes of a meeting held in the war room, Admiralty House, 28 May 1943 in HS2/226.

⁷⁶ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0), (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), entitled 'CCO and ACOS', ref. SN/246, 3 February 1943, in HS2/276.

⁷⁷ PRO: 'Notes', ref. JWH/VK, 8 January 1943, and letter to Group Captain G. T. Jarman, RAF Kinloss, from CAP, 25 February 1943, in DEFE2/522. Memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to C/D, (Charles Hambro), ref. F/7352/130/17, 18 February 1943, in HS2/218.

conditions, and therefore refused the loan of fishing vessels to carry out the operation.⁷⁸ The Norwegian military authorities also protested against ‘Cobblestones’ because it was believed that such operations could put the local population at unnecessary risk.⁷⁹ The Admiralty was, however, the final arbiter in these matters and if an operation did not directly clash with SIS or naval activity, it was invariably allowed to go ahead.⁸⁰ It was the severe weather conditions that regularly occurred in the North Sea, not organisational differences, that was the most disruptive factor in operations in this theatre.⁸¹ And despite these differences, SOE’s view of COHQ was that it had sought consultation from the beginning, was prepared to modify aspects of its proposals as a result of SOE’s recommendations, and that ‘co-operation was more likely to intensify than otherwise’.⁸²

As COHQ became increasingly involved in preparations for the invasion of northwest Europe in 1944 the Commando groups operating out of the Shetlands were gradually moved south or disbanded during the summer of 1943. Consequently, co-operation between SOE and COHQ in Norway came to an end.⁸³ The two organisations had been natural partners and by working together they had from an early stage been able to take the offensive against German interests in this theatre. Their close relationship also illustrates how beneficial collaboration was for SOE in

⁷⁸ PRO: letters from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Commander Ryder, COHQ, ref. JSW/2290 and 2392, 12 and 16 December 1942, and memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to MG, ref. JSW/2223, 29 November 1942, all in HS2/226.

⁷⁹ PRO: NHM: letter from General Hansteen, Norwegian C-in-C, to Lord Louise Mountbatten, CCO, ref. J.nr/1546/42, 30 December 1942 in FOIV archive, mappe 17-C-4.

⁸⁰ The Admiralty approved in principle ‘Omnibus’, a series of amphibious raids against defensive positions along the Norwegian coast, and ‘Cobblestones’ as long as individual operations fitted in with ACOS operations and did not interfere directly with SIS activities. PRO: memo from Rear Admiral Brand, ACNS (H), to CCO, “C” (SIS), and CD (Sir Charles Hambro), 19 January 1943 in HS2/226.

⁸¹ PRO: ‘Report on Combined Operations North Force 1942/43 by Force Commanders’, ref. CR 4777/43, 9 May 1943, and memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1058, 30 May 1943, in HS2/226.

⁸² PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0), (Brigadier C. McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/2504, 29 December 1942.

⁸³ In July 1943, ‘North Force’ was withdrawn, along with troops of 12 Commando, and replaced by Royal Marines as shore guards. 14 Commando was disbanded on 31 August, although Norwegians of 10 (1A) Commando stayed with 30th (RNorN) MTB Flotilla to form 54 (N) MTB Flotilla in August 1943, otherwise called ‘Timberforce’, until April 1944. Kjelstadli claims that raids were abandoned in March 1943 because of the detrimental effect on the civilian population. The final Commando operation, ‘Checkmate’ along the Norwegian coast was carried out on 30 April 1943. It was part of the ‘Cobblestones’ operations, which the Norwegian authorities had objected to because of fear of civilian reprisals. See: C. Messenger, *The Commandos 1940-1946*, (London: Grafton, 1990), pp. 246-251. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 201-202. H.K. Svensholt, *Norske Torpedobåter gjennom 125 år 1873-1998*, (Oslo: Norsk Tidsskrift for Sjøvesen, 1998). Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 216 and notes 8,9, and 10, pp. 419-420.

carrying out its plans in Norway, although by 1943 it was more than capable of operating independently.⁸⁴

II

SOE and the Political Warfare Executive: Subversion through Propaganda

According to its Charter one of SOE's responsibilities was also to co-ordinate subversion against the enemy overseas, and an important element of subversion was propaganda.⁸⁵ In the years prior to the outbreak of the Second World War two new organisations, Electra House (EH) and Section D had begun to examine the possible contribution of covert propaganda in the war against Germany.⁸⁶ But with the creation of SOE in July 1940 a re-organisation occurred and SO1 took over this responsibility.⁸⁷

In 1940, subversive propaganda was another small element of Britain's forward strategy, which set out to undermine not only the strength but also the spirit of the German armed forces, 'especially in the occupied countries'.⁸⁸ The establishment of SO1 did not, however, end the fragmentation and overlapping that characterised the dissemination of and responsibility for propaganda, and it was a further attempt to co-ordinate activity and agree responsibility within this field that led in August 1941 to the creation of the Political Warfare Executive (PWE). This new organisation, initially run by an Executive Committee responsible to a ministerial team with representatives from the Foreign Office, Ministry of Information (MOI), and SOE, was set up to 'co-ordinate and direct' all 'propaganda to enemy occupied countries'.⁸⁹ This cumbersome structure lasted until the following spring when day to day responsibility passed to Bruce Lockhart, its Director General.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ See Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

⁸⁵ D. Garnett, *The Secret History of PWE: The Political Warfare Executive 1939-1945*, (London: St Ermin's Press, 2002), pp. ix & 1.

⁸⁶ Garnett, *The Secret History of PWE*, pp. x-xii.

⁸⁷ Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 6-7. E. Howe, *The Black Game: British Subversive Operations against the Germans during the Second World War*, (London: M. Joseph, 1982), pp. 36-53.

⁸⁸ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in CAB80/56.

⁸⁹ The structure and responsibilities of PWE were laid out in what has become known as the 'Charter of PWE', which was initialled by the Prime Minister on 19 August 1941. The reorganisation was announced in Parliament on 12 September 1941. See: Garnett, *The Secret History of PWE*, pp. 75-81.

⁹⁰ Lockhart was appointed Director General in March 1942 and remained in position until the end of the war. *Ibid.*, p. 124.

PWE was responsible for creating and laying down policy on political warfare, including both overt and covert propaganda, and with its creation the short life of SO1 was ended. It was divided into regions, including Scandinavia, under Regional Directors, who were responsible for administrating and controlling the work in their respective theatres.⁹¹ As part of the agreement that led to its formation it was accepted, however, that 'all activities of the Political Warfare Executive outside Great Britain' would be 'conducted through the medium of the Special Operations Executive'.⁹² This was re-affirmed in a new agreement signed in September 1942, which stated that all work in the field will 'continue to be done by SOE as agents for PWE'.⁹³ To enable it to undertake subversive propaganda activities in Norway, PWE therefore required the assistance of SOE, which was the source of its Norwegian agents as well as equipment and transportation. Moreover, it was part of SOE's remit to ensure that the German forces in Norway remained 'generally as uncomfortable as possible'.⁹⁴ It was, therefore, beneficial for both parties to work together.

There was, however, also a political dimension to the use of propaganda that made the implementation of this type of subversive activity in Norway extremely problematic. The Norwegian government considered that the dissemination of all information in Norway was both its constitutional responsibility and an important element in rebuilding its relationship with the Norwegian people after it had been severely damaged by the German occupation.⁹⁵ This determination to retain control over all forms of communication with its people would both delay and complicate PWE's and SOE's efforts to undertake their own subversive propaganda operations. Ultimately, it was only through using its close relationship with FO, and by confining subversive propaganda to undermining the morale of the German forces, that SOE was able during the final months of the occupation to undertake this type of activity in Norway

It is 'operational propaganda', the production and distribution of leaflets, posters, and clandestine newspapers, through agents working in Norway, something particularly dependent on SOE involvement, which will be examined in this section.

⁹¹ The first regional director for Scandinavia was Thomas Barman. Ibid., p. 86.

⁹² MR Jebb's minute of 5 September in SOE archive file (AD/S.1) CD/p.5/23, cited in Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 101.

⁹³ Appendix J, SOE and PWE (Agreement of September 1942) cited in Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 772-773.

⁹⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1942, in HS2/128.

⁹⁵ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 122.

It will not be possible within the confines of this thesis to consider propaganda disseminated to Norway through the BBC, 'Freedom Stations' (clandestine broadcasting), the dropping of leaflets, or by the spreading of subversive rumours or 'Sibs' as they were referred to, even though SOE made a contribution to all of these.⁹⁶

In the COS directives to SOE, studies by the British Planning Staff, and in SHAEF directives, there was from as early as the autumn of 1940 regular reference to the use of propaganda as a means to subvert the morale of German troops. It was part of a policy that set out to 'soften up the enemy'.⁹⁷ It was therefore another small strategic tool that the Allies attempted to employ in the war against Germany. From the summer of 1940, SO1 began to consider the use of subversive propaganda in Norway, and in July the Norwegian born journalist Thomas Barman produced the first of a series of lengthy papers on the subject. Until SOE's ideas had 'further matured', however, Barman was largely interested in disseminating information through leaflets or radio broadcasts, which he believed should be done in collaboration with the Norwegian authorities. Although Barman did not always practice what he preached, often upsetting his Norwegian colleagues, he did develop a close working association with a fellow journalist, H.K. Lehmkuhl at the *Informasjonskontor*, Information Office (IK), which was set up in London in February 1941 to co-ordinate propaganda on behalf of the Norwegian government.⁹⁸ This is significant because it is indicative of the future working relationship that developed between SOE and Norwegian authorities on the issue of propaganda: it was pragmatic and based on a realisation that both parties had to find a way of accommodating each other's concerns and requirements.

⁹⁶ Sibs were rumours disseminated either through the clandestine radio stations or through agents in the field that were designed to subvert the authority or morale of the German authorities across occupied Europe. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, pp. 151-152, & vol. II, pp. 99-100. H. F. Dahl, *Dette er London: NRK i krig 1940-1945*, (Oslo: J.W. Cappelens Forlag, 1978). Garnett, *The Secret History of PWE*, pp. 211-215.

⁹⁷ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in CAB80/56. JP (41) 649, 'Special Operations Executive', report by the Joint Planning Staff (JPS), 9 August 1941, in CAB 79/13. COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68. COS 957 (0), 'The SOE's Fourth Directive', 9 November 1944 in CAB80/89. 'Operational Directive to SFHQ', ref. SHAEF/17240/13/Ops, 23 March 1944, in WO 219/4967.

⁹⁸ Barman upset the Norwegian authorities when in a comment that he made during a broadcast on the BBC he encouraged the local population to hoard food. PRO: papers entitled: 'Fifth Column in Scandinavia and Holland', 31 July 1940; 'Underground Propaganda to Scandinavia', 29 September 1940; 'Subversive Propaganda for Norway', 4 October 1940, all by T.G. Barman, in FO898/240. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 151. T. Barman, *Diplomatic Correspondent*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1968). Dahl, *Dette er London*, pp. 162, 206.

From the summer of 1941, PWE continued the interest in Norway as a country where subversive propaganda could be used to ‘demoralise the German armies of occupation’. This interest had by this stage, however, gone beyond simply using radio broadcasts or dropping leaflets, and included sending specially trained propaganda agents into the country. Consequently, from the autumn of 1941, PWE and SOE began to work together with the objective of disseminating propaganda within Norway in order to make the German occupation ‘a drain on enemy resources’ and to maintain Norwegian morale at a time when ‘no Allied initiative of any importance’ was expected in the country.⁹⁹ The agents, transportation, security, and communications would be supplied through SOE, training and directives in propaganda would come from PWE.¹⁰⁰ At this time Captain Hackett (later Major) head of PWE’s training school visited STS 26 at Aviemore and eventually with the backing of Charles Hambro began to recruit Norwegian volunteers. Between 1941 and the spring of 1943 at least fifteen Norwegian SOE agents eventually received propaganda training.¹⁰¹ Hackett’s initiative was the beginning of a joint SOE/PWE project that aimed to get ‘field-workers’ into Norway to undertake subversive propaganda work. The initial steps would be low-key with agents sent in to survey and collect information on local conditions, although activities such as staging passive ‘go-slow’ resistance and setting up ‘patriotic black markets’ to undermine German rationing were also envisaged.¹⁰² In February 1942, however, in a ‘Plan of Political Warfare against Scandinavia’, it was concluded that the co-operation of the Norwegian government was necessary if this type of activity was ever to be carried out successfully.¹⁰³

After arriving in Britain it was important for the Norwegian government, at a time when many blamed it for Norway’s lack of readiness in April 1940, to make contact and strengthen its position with the Norwegian people. It also believed it was

⁹⁹ PRO: draft paper entitled, ‘Propaganda and Political Warfare-Norway’, attached to a memo from Mr Kenney to Capt. Hackett, 11 April 1942 in FO898/73.

¹⁰⁰ SOE’s Capt. H.A. Nyberg saw PWE supporting training, acting in an advisory capacity, and assisting in technical matters. PRO: paper to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson from Capt. H.A. Nyberg, 7 September 1942 in FO898/73.

¹⁰¹ PRO: ‘A Survey of Training, Preparation of and Planning for the “Operational Propaganda Field-Work Scheme” for Norway, as well as the Reasons for Abandoning the Scheme’, from SN/I (Capt. H.A. Nyberg) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), 10 March 1943. Memo from D/CD (Sir Charles Hambro) to SY, ref. DCD/1438, 6 April 1942 in FO898/73.

¹⁰² PRO: Letter from SY (K) to S (George Wiskeman), 16 April 1942 in FO898/73.

¹⁰³ PRO: paper entitled, ‘Plan of Political Warfare against Scandinavia’, ref. PW (M) (42) 20, 18 February 1942 in FO898/240.

vitally important for it to retain control over all forms of communication with the Home Front, whether through BBC broadcasts, the dropping of leaflets, or the sending of propaganda agents into the field. It therefore instituted a series of measures, including the setting up of IK in early 1941 to maintain and strengthen links with occupied Norway and to represent the country's interests with her allies and neutral countries.¹⁰⁴

Although there were difficulties between the British and Norwegian authorities on issues such as BBC broadcasts and the dropping of leaflets,¹⁰⁵ the practical view that Norwegian support would be beneficial when undertaking propaganda activities that aimed to help the 'Allied cause' prevailed.¹⁰⁶ It was, however, the close collaboration between SOE and FO, exercised through the ANCC that ultimately proved decisive in creating a framework within which the planning and implementation of subversive propaganda operations in Norway could be carried out. With the establishment of the ANCC all subversive operations were dispatched to Norway under the joint authority of SOE and FO. Consequently, from this point the sending in of 'field-workers' to undertake propaganda activities, directed by PWE but using SOE agents and facilities could only be achieved in collaboration with the Norwegian authorities. Therefore, between April and July 1942, through the medium of the ANCC, a series of discussions was carried out with the aim of setting up an organisational structure for conducting propaganda operations.¹⁰⁷ This eventually led to an agreement that gave the Norwegian government a significant measure of control over the production and distribution of subversive material. The IK was made responsible for propaganda and the directives that were passed to the Norwegian agents, FO and SOE were together to manage the agents, whilst a sub-committee ensured collaboration with PWE. A Propaganda Office under Bård Krogvig was also set up to represent FO.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ UK Innst. VI, p. 145, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 122.

¹⁰⁵ At the end of August 1940 the Norwegian authorities reached agreement with BBC and Ministry of Information over broadcasts to Norway, which satisfied Norwegian demands and provided a framework within which both sides worked with little conflict for the rest of the war. See: Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 151, and Dahl, *Dette er London*, pp. 153-155.

¹⁰⁶ PRO: memo from Rowland Kenney (PWE) to Capt. Hackett, 11 April 1942, including a draft paper entitled 'Propaganda and Political Warfare-Norway' in FO898/73.

¹⁰⁷ PRO: minutes of the ANCC 24 April, 13 May, 29 May, 10 July, 14 August, 11 September, 9 October, and 13 November 1942, cited in FO898/73.

¹⁰⁸ On 8 July 1942 a meeting was held between Bård Krogvig, Capt. Nyberg (SOE), and Capt. Hackett (PWE) to discuss this arrangement. On the same day Roland Kenney from PWE met Tor Gjesdal from the IK, who confirmed the arrangement. See: PRO: 'Extracts from the minutes of ANCC of 29 May

This collaborative framework, despite its bureaucratic complexity, led in the summer of 1942 to a joint British/Norwegian plan called the ‘Operational Propaganda Field-Work Scheme’, which was the culmination of the work that SOE and PWE had begun the previous autumn with the training of specialist propaganda agents. This divided southern Norway into ten districts, each with its own separate team including a radio operator that would undertake propaganda activities in the local area.¹⁰⁹ The hope was that propaganda agents would begin to operate in Norway from mid September 1942, but despite its involvement the Norwegian government was slow to accept the scheme and it was November before it was approved. Moreover, it was also agreed by both SOE and the Norwegian authorities that the plan should be laid before the Norwegian Home Front before implementation and on 27 November 1942 Gunnar Fougner, with the code-name ‘Petrel’, travelled to Norway to meet resistance leaders. He eventually returned to London via Stockholm, indicating that the scheme had been well received. In late February 1943, however, a letter arrived in London rejecting the plan because it was believed that the further infiltration of agents from outside was unwise and because such activity could be done better from Oslo. Consequently, at a time when the Norwegian government’s relationship with the resistance leadership was at a delicate and difficult stage, the project was abandoned.¹¹⁰

Collaboration between SOE and PWE had begun in the autumn of 1941, but Norwegian support was important in the carrying out of this type of subversive activity. The dissemination of underground propaganda was, however, delayed, complicated and ultimately obstructed by the concerns of both the Norwegian government and the resistance leadership in Oslo. Because it was also targeted at the civilian population in occupied Norway, it played a role in the development of the relationship between the Home Front and the Norwegian government and resistance

1942 and internal PWE memo from Mr R. Kenney to Thomas Barman, 10 July 1942 in FO898/73.

¹⁰⁹ Olav Riste suggests this project was the result of a Norwegian response to a British wish to intensify Allied propaganda in occupied Europe in light of a fear that people were losing patience with the failure to establish a ‘Second Front’. PRO: ‘A survey of the “Operational Propaganda Scheme for Norway” as well as the Reasons for Abandoning the Scheme’, 10 March 1943, from SN/1 (Capt. H. A. Nyberg) SOE to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) in FO898/73. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 99.

¹¹⁰ Fougner met Bjørn Helland Hansen and Eugen Johannessen whilst in Oslo. A meeting was held on 28 February 1943 in London, which included members of SOE, PWE, and Norwegian representatives, to discuss the letter from the Home Front. PRO: internal PWE memo from Mr Brinley Thomas to Mr K. Kenney, 1 March 1943, (written 28 February 1943), and ‘A Survey of the “Operational Propaganda Field-Work Scheme for Norway” as well as Reasons for Abandoning the Scheme’, from SN/1 (Capt. H.A. Nyberg) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S.Wilson), 10 March 1943, all in FO898/73. Riste, *London regjeringa*,

leadership, which was a sensitive political issue. It was this that ultimately set back and restricted its military use in this theatre.

Despite these difficulties, however, SOE and PWE did not give up and continued with their efforts to instigate operational propaganda in Norway. The Norwegian Home Front was contacted again in June 1943, but once more rejected Allied advances, arguing that with a large underground press and many people still listening to the BBC's London radio the population was already fully aware of and largely supported the British view.¹¹¹ Attempts were also made to have an officer with responsibility for 'black' propaganda attached to the Press Office at the Norwegian Legation in Stockholm, but this was also rebuffed.¹¹² Nevertheless, during the second half of 1943 and early 1944, SOE and PWE began to make some headway. In response to Norwegian concerns they changed their approach to propaganda operations in Norway in two important ways. Firstly, the plan to use separate propaganda teams was abandoned; teams already assigned to Norway on other tasks would carry out propaganda as an additional role.¹¹³ This allowed PWE to hide behind SOE respectability in the eyes of the Norwegian military authorities and therefore avoid the suspicions of its government toward propaganda operations.¹¹⁴ Secondly, the Norwegian authorities were advised that future propaganda undertaken by SOE teams would only be directed against the morale of the German occupying forces.¹¹⁵ In the future, therefore, it would be a purely military exercise and the Norwegian population would not be involved, thereby excising the political element. Compared to what had originally been planned this compromise curtailed the extent of operational propaganda operations in Norway during the final stages of the war, but meant that they could at last be carried out. This was at a time, in the run up to the liberation and whilst several enemy divisions remained in the country, when it was especially important to undertake any activity that might undermine German morale

vol. II, pp. 99-100.

¹¹¹ PRO: reply from the Home Front on the issue of Allied propaganda, sent to Trygve Lie, ref. CPR/EJ, June 1943 in HS2/234.

¹¹² PRO: minutes of the 20th meeting of the ANCC, 1 July 1943 in HS2/234.

¹¹³ PRO: notes of a discussion between Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson (SOE) and Mr R. Kenney, (PWE), 11 August 1943 in FO898/73.

¹¹⁴ PRO: 'PWE preliminary working plan for Norway', 19 November 1943, produced in response to a joint PWE/OWI (the American Office of War Information), and SOE/OSS political warfare plan, 9 October 1943, in FO898/73.

¹¹⁵ PRO: minutes of the 27th meeting of the ANCC, 10 February 1944 in HS2/138. Telegram from SN/I (Capt. H.A. Nyberg) to 8627 (E. Nielsen), 24 February 1944 in HS2/234.

and thereby help to achieve the objective of a peaceful capitulation rather than a violent last stand.

Prior to these changes, little in the way of subversive propaganda was carried out in Norway. In March 1943, Operation Mardonius, consisting of Gregers Gram and Max Manus, which had the task of attacking shipping in Oslo harbour, also undertook work that had propaganda implications.¹¹⁶ Both agents had received propaganda training,¹¹⁷ and whilst in Oslo they conducted a Gallup Poll, which was used as the basis of a report on conditions at home. It was eventually passed to PWE.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, by this stage a PWE/SOE Co-ordination Committee had been established to discuss issues of policy and which included members from both SOE's Norwegian section and the Northern Region of PWE.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, little was happening at a local operational level and in June 1943, Lt. Col. Wilson made the self-evident observation that Anti-Axis propaganda required 'development'. In an attempt to accelerate efforts a decision was therefore made to give 'basic propaganda training' to all the members of NIC (1), 'so that those who go out into the field can deal with this requirement in addition to their other duties'.¹²⁰ This was the first sign that SOE was abandoning the idea of sending independent propaganda 'field-workers' into Norway. A few months later Operation Bundle, which also included Manus and Gram, was initiated. It was another operation against shipping in the Oslo fjord but at the request of PWE the operation would also examine a number of propaganda issues, including ways to demoralise the Wehrmacht.¹²¹ Due to the strict security measures implemented by the German authorities around Oslo, especially the harbour areas,

¹¹⁶ For details see Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 325.

¹¹⁷ PRO: memo from SN/1 (Capt. H.A. Nyberg) to 8627 (Nielsen) in Stockholm, ref. N. 46, 16 February 1944 in HS2/192.

¹¹⁸ Although Gram and Manus admitted that the report could not give a 'reliable picture of the situation as a whole', they nevertheless concluded that the population in Norway tended 'towards passivity and the onlooker attitude'. PRO: report entitled 'Impressions from the "Homefront" from a visit to the Oslo District during the period 12 March 1943 to 3 May 1943' in HS2/191. The report is also in the PWE file, FO898/74.

¹¹⁹ From SOE there was Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, H.A. Nyberg, and G. Wiskeman and from PWE, Brinley Thomas and Mr. K. Kenney. PRO: letter from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to Brinley Thomas (PWE), ref. F/488/130/17, 24 August 1943, in HS2/234.

¹²⁰ PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44' attached to memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (E.E. Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1942, in HS2/218.

¹²¹ Mr Brinley-Thomas from PWE contacted J. C. Adamson (SOE) and asked if Gram could look in to the need for propaganda in Norway, how much the Home Front was doing to demoralise the Wehrmacht, and what would be the best methods for PWE to use to demoralise the Wehrmacht in Norway. See: PRO: letter from J.C. Adamson (SOE) to 2nd/Lt. Gram, ref. 517, 9 October 1943 in HS2/192.

‘Bundle’ was initially a failure. The large amount of information on conditions in Norway accumulated by Gram and Manus whilst in Oslo, which the following February was passed on to PWE, and their establishment of an underground newspaper called ‘*Aftenbladet*’, indicates, however, that their propaganda activities were more fruitful.¹²²

This led in January 1944 to the implementation of Operation Derby, a plan for Gram and Manus to undertake activities that were designed to undermine the morale of the German forces in the Oslo area. It was instigated from Stockholm and given priority over ‘Bundle.’ It resulted in the establishment of a propaganda organisation that produced illegal newspapers and distributed posters, stickers and leaflets across eastern Norway.¹²³ It was carried out with the acceptance of the Norwegian authorities in London, and knowledge but non-involvement of the resistance leadership in Oslo.¹²⁴ It eventually employed almost 500 people, divided into nine districts stretching from Drammen in the west to Sarpsborg in the east, and produced two German papers ‘*Beobachter*’ and ‘*Im Westen nichts Neues*’.¹²⁵ Through Operation Durham a similar endeavour was undertaken in Trondheim between March 1944 and April 1945. Minor propaganda activities had been carried out in this area before, but ‘Durham’ supplied with material primarily out of Stockholm, operated on a large scale. It had over 100 men producing posters, pamphlets, and brochures with the aim of irritating the Germans, undermining their morale, and even encouraging them to desert to Sweden.¹²⁶

¹²² The material arrived in London on 3 February and was immediately passed to PWE. Gram and Manus requested that a printing press be supplied to help in the production of their illegal newspaper ‘*Aftenbladet*’. PRO: file note headed ‘Max Manus and Gregers Gram’. Letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to J. Galsworthy, (Northern Dept. Foreign Office), ref. JSW/2714, 19 August 1944. Letter from SOE HQ to 8627 (Nielsen) Stockholm, ref. N46, 16 February 1944, all in HS2/192.

¹²³ PRO: letter from SOE HQ (Lt. J.S. Col. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen) Stockholm, ref. N114, 24 March 1944. Letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to SOE HQ, ref. N66, 7 February 1944, citing a letter by Wilson, ref. N14, 22 January 1944, all in HS2/192.

¹²⁴ Early in 1943 Bjarne Øen visited Stockholm and according to Manus assured him that ‘anti-nazi propaganda was important to the war effort’. PRO: letters from ST (Leif Tronstad) in FO IV to SN/O (J.C. Adamson), ref. no. 001938, 20 January 1944. Letter from SU, (Bjarne Øen) FO IV, to D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. no. 001961, 27 January 1944. Operation Orders for Bundle/Derby, 28 March 1943, all in HS2/192. NHM: ‘Rapport til FO fra Fenrik Max Manus ang. Derby’, 24 September 1945 in FO IV archive, boks 78.

¹²⁵ According to Manus the organisation totalled 490 men. NHM: ‘Rapport til FO fra Fenrik Max Manus ang. Derby’ in FO IV archive, boks 78. M. Manus, *Underwater Saboteur*, (London: William Kimber, 1953), p. 175.

¹²⁶ NHM: report entitled ‘Durham’, 17 July 1945, interrogation of Lt. Arthur Pevik, 14 June 1945, and report on ‘Lark’ by E. Gjems-Onstad, Stockholm, 12 July 1944 in SOE archive, boks 35b, mappe 22/3/1. E. Gjems-Onstad, *Durham: Hemmelige operasjoner i Trøndelag mot tysk okkupasjonsmakt 1943-1945*, (Oslo: Solia Forlag, 1981).

These operations are significant as they mark the late but eventual initiation of SOE's plan to undertake subversive propaganda in Norway. They were built on the back of SOE teams or agents that were already in the field and they denoted the opening of a propaganda offensive that targeted the morale of the German forces in Norway in the period running up to the country's liberation. The scale of these operations also gives an indication of the weight that was ultimately placed on subversive propaganda as a means of helping to ensure a peaceful capitulation in Norway. This was especially important when with Allied military resources concentrated elsewhere, other more unorthodox measures became a particularly valuable additional tool in this theatre.

PWE initially felt that the attitude of the Norwegian government had limited the scope of propaganda activities in Norway, and even at the end of 1943 it still hoped to recruit independent Norwegian 'political warfare agents', to go into Norway to support SOE tasks that aimed to undermine German morale and prepare the population for an Allied invasion.¹²⁷ By the following spring, however, it acknowledged that in respect of operations against the Germans, the 'Norwegian authorities had accepted that this was a British province', and that through SOE 'practical progress had been made'.¹²⁸ From spring 1944, therefore, PWE began to shift its attention away from operational propaganda and toward preparing the Norwegian people for the country's liberation, and began to work closely with Scotco and the Norwegian government. A Political Warfare Branch was set up within Scotco under Lt. Colonel Petch,¹²⁹ and in July Mr Brinley Thomas from PWE was appointed liaison officer between the Political Warfare Division (PWD) of SHAEF and the Norwegian authorities.¹³⁰ The focal point of their work over the following months was the distribution of leaflets to Norway. SOE involvement was limited, although after initial reluctance it agreed to allow the use of Special Duty aircraft to drop these leaflets.¹³¹

The use of subversive propaganda in Norway was another strand of SOE's policy that depended on collaboration. It was, however, yet again the mix of strategic,

¹²⁷ PRO: 'Joint PWE/OWI and SOE/OSS Political Warfare Plan. Regional Summary – Norway', 26 November 1943, in FO898/242.

¹²⁸ PRO: letter from Mr Brinley Thomas to Director of Plans, 12 April 1944, in FO898/242.

¹²⁹ See: PRO: FO898/243, and memo no. 22, from SHAEF, Psychological Warfare Division, 1 July 1944, in FO898/382.

¹³⁰ PRO: memo no. 22 from SHAEF, Psychological Warfare Division, 1 July 1944 in FO898/382.

¹³¹ PRO: minutes of a meeting at 64 Baker St., 29 December 1944, in FO898/382.

political and collaborative issues that ultimately shaped the nature of these activities. They had strategic origins, were implemented jointly by SOE and PWE with Norwegian assistance, but held back by the sensitivity of the Norwegian government and resistance leadership to anything that involved communication with the local population.

III

SOE and OSS in Norway: American Subjugation

Finally, SOE's plans and activities in Norway were also influenced by its relationship with a new American clandestine organisation that was created in June 1942. After the USA joined the war against Germany it entered into a close military partnership with Britain. This alliance was quickly extended into the area of special operations and in the summer of 1942 the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) under the leadership of William Donovan entered into discussions with SOE over their future relationship. The close organisational and operational relationship between the two organisations in northwest Europe was symbolised by the constitution in May 1944 of the Special Forces HQ (SFHQ). This collaboration was also extended to Norway. In the spring of 1943, it was agreed that this country would be a SOE sphere of operations and that the Special Operations section of OSS (SO), which was responsible for sabotage and subversion, would have to work with SOE and FO through the forum of the ANCC. A triumvirate was therefore formed, although in Norway, SO was always the junior partner.

SOE policy and operations benefited from SO support in two ways. Most importantly through OSS, and the direct contact it had to the American Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), SO provided additional resources, especially equipment and transportation, which often helped to advance special operations at a local level within Norway. SO was, however, also anxious to carry out its own sabotage and subversion, whilst SOE was keen to make use of OSS American/Norwegians recruits as a source of additional manpower. Consequently, there was a good reason for them to combine their efforts and several attempts were made to make use of American volunteers, although ultimately with very limited success. Direct American involvement in special operations in Norway was therefore primarily supportive, but

nevertheless an additional factor in shaping certain aspects of SOE activity in this theatre.

The relationship between SOE and SO in Europe and Norway was eventually based on negotiated agreements. After OSS was formed in June 1942, it was decided that both organisations should co-ordinate their activities in the various theatres of operations across the globe. Discussions began almost immediately and an agreement was reached and confirmed by both countries the following September. Norway was perhaps surprisingly defined as an 'Invasion' country where there would be 'one integrated Field Force controlled jointly by SOE and the London Office of OSS'.¹³² This arrangement, however, did not prove to be enough to ensure 'joint' control over special operations in this theatre. In the autumn of 1942, OSS made contact with a Lt. Stromholtz, who had been sent to the USA on a lecture tour by the Norwegian authorities, with a view to recruiting him and sending him to Norway as its own agent.¹³³ This provoked concern both within SOE and FO. Therefore, after an American proposal to carry out psychological warfare in Norway from a base in Iceland, again using its own agents, discussions were instigated in early January 1943 involving SOE, SO, and FO in order to clarify their relationship.¹³⁴ An accord was quickly reached. It was accepted that SO would set up a Norwegian desk in London and that all its personnel would be under the control of and be administered by the ANCC, which would have an American representative. All supplies and training facilities would also be pooled, although SO would normally service operations north of parallel 65°N, (around Namsos, north of Trondheim).¹³⁵

This provisional agreement and OSS proposal for operations in Norway using a base in Iceland were then repeatedly placed before the COS during the spring of

¹³² The American Office of Strategic Services was an agency of the USA government directly responsible to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). PRO: 'Notes on OSS/SOE Liaison' in HS8/4. B. F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA*, (New York: Basic Books, 1983), pp. 160-163. I. Dear, *Sabotage and Subversion: The SOE and OSS at War*, (London: Cassell, 1996), pp. 12-13. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of the SOE*, pp. 388-393.

¹³³ PRO: note from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/1868, 24 October 1942 in HS2/134. NHM: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Leif Tronstad ref. JSW/2236, 30 November 1942 in FO IV archive, boks 32, mappe 6-A-2.

¹³⁴ PRO: 'Summary of Proposed Psychological Warfare Undertaking in Norway', 23 December 1942 in HS2/134.

¹³⁵ At the meeting were Sir Charles Hambro (SOE), General W. Hansteen (Norwegian Commander-in-Chief), Colonel Huntingdon (SO), and Sir James Marshall-Cornwall (SOE). PRO: 'Précis of Meeting held at Kingston House on 11 January 1943 to Discuss OSS Activities in Norway'. Letter from CD (Sir Charles Hambro) to G50.214 (Colonel Huntingdon - SO), ref. CD/4226, 14 January 1943 in HS2/218.

1943. With the Admiralty anxious to protect SIS from the potential risk of another organisation operating in this theatre, it was April before there was unanimity and the proposals accepted and clarified. The proviso that was eventually added was that although all OSS operations would be subject to the control of SOE and the Norwegian High Command, sea-borne operations would come under the authority of the Admiralty, and would be subject to agreement with SIS.¹³⁶

The SO section of OSS had therefore accepted that the whole of Norway was a SOE sphere of operation and that it had to work with both SOE and Norwegian military authorities. As a result in May 1943, Sir Frederic Cromwell from SO was attached to SOE and joined the ANCC until April 1944 when Lt. Commander F.W.G. Ungar Vetlesen replaced him.¹³⁷ Significantly, this meant that in the future SO could and would not act independently anywhere in Norway, even in the north where it eventually made its largest contribution. Importantly, therefore, any possibility of a ‘crossing of lines’ or duplication of effort was at least theoretically ruled out.

This arrangement was quickly replicated in Stockholm where it was agreed in June 1943 that an American special operations base could be established. In August Major (later Lt. Colonel) George Brewer visited the city to commence preparations,¹³⁸ and in October 1943 an covenant was drawn up for the operation of this base, named ‘Westfield’, which was eventually located at the American Legation. It was also accepted that all OSS missions out of Stockholm would be considered joint SOE/SO operations, that consultations would be held in advance and that there would be a full exchange of personnel and equipment when possible.¹³⁹

By mid 1943, therefore, SO had not only subordinated itself to SOE and FO partnership, but become part of the network of organisations that played such a significant role in shaping SOE plans and operations in Norway. From this point it

¹³⁶ The proposal was first placed before the COS on 15 March 1943. At this meeting the Admiralty objected to yet another organisation operating off the coast of Norway. Eventually, at COS (43) 75th meeting, 24 March 1943, the COS accepted the proposals with additions. See: PRO: COS (43) 117 (0), OSS proposals and the agreement with SOE regarding operations in Norway, and letter from CD (Sir Charles Hambro) to Lt. Col. Bruce (OSS), ref. CD/4776, 26 March 1943 in HS2/219.

¹³⁷ PRO: HS7/174, SOE’s Norwegian Section-History.

¹³⁸ For details see: PRO: history of the ‘Stockholm Mission’, by Miss Janet Gow, December 1945, in HS7/190.

¹³⁹ The ‘Westfield Mission’ eventually had five officers, including its head Major George Brewer (Apollo) and Hans Ericksen (Vaudeville), who was responsible for Norwegian affairs. PRO: paper entitled ‘Project Westfield’, 23 October 1943, addressed to Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman (SOE) and Lt. Col. J. F. Haskell, (SO) in HS2/134. History of the ‘Stockholm Mission’, by Miss Janet Gow, December 1945, in HS7/190.

began to make a direct contribution to special operations in this theatre. Firstly, and most significantly American power came into play through the provision of additional equipment and resources. OSS helped in obtaining the three American submarine chasers; the 110-foot diesel engined boats that from autumn 1943 were used to transport men and equipment across the North Sea to Norway's west coast. The loss of several of the fishing boats from the Shetlands Base during the winter of 1942-43, resulted in SOE's decision to replace them, but unfortunately the Admiralty was unable to help. Eventually it was General William Donovan that persuaded the JCS to agree to allow three American fast craft to join the Norwegian flotilla, under OSS command, provided the American 'Theatre Commander' agreed. Through the help of Admiral Stark, US naval representative in London since 1941, agreement was obtained and over the next eighteen months SOE was able to use these vessels to safely and significantly increase the volume of men and equipment it delivered to Norway.¹⁴⁰

William Donovan and Colonel David Bruce, head of SO in Europe, were also directly involved in establishing Operation Sonnie. This set out to create an air transportation service adequate to bring initially 2000 Norwegian refugees from Stockholm to Britain. The project began in early 1944, when five B-24 Liberators from the American 492nd Bomber Group were assigned to the US Army Air Force officer Bernt Balchen. The first flight to Stockholm was at the end of March 1944 and over the next seven months 1,547 Norwegians were flown back to Britain to become another pool of potential recruits for the Norwegian armed forces and merchant navy during the final stages of the war. By the end of the war Operation Sonnie had flown over 5000 refugees out of occupied Europe. As an offshoot of this, however, Balchen also managed to obtain the use of the six Liberators that carried out sixty-four sorties to Norway between June and September 1944 to drop supplies to Milorg groups. OSS personnel were attached to this unit and organised the provision of supplies, including food, medicine, and sabotage materials, from their packaging station near Birmingham.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ PRO: 'Interview With Admiral Stark, ISA', 24 August 1943' in HS8/790. Present at the meeting were Sir Charles Hambro (SOE) and Colonel Bruce (OSS). See: Barnett, *Engage the Enemy more Closely*, p. 773, for details of Stark.

¹⁴¹ B. Balchen, *Come North with Me*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1959), pp. 258-268. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 172-175. B. H. Heimark, *The OSS Norwegian Special Operations Group in World War II*, (Westport Connecticut: Praeger, 1994), p. 16.

It was also OSS that requested that SHAEF back a request for the provision of Arctic equipment from the USA in order to supply a series of reception camps for members of Milorg that SFHQ planned to set up in the Norwegian mountains during the final months of the war.¹⁴² In early February, the JCS gave approval for OSS to ship 450 tons of equipment, sufficient for 30,000 to 40,000 Norwegian resistance fighters, to the UK. By mid-March, this material was ready for transportation to Scandinavia, although by this time it was too late for it to be distributed and thereby be of any significant benefit to Milorg.¹⁴³

It was also hoped that the Americans could provide additional manpower in order to help escalate special operations in Norway. In discussions in October 1942 over how to put the Knaben molybdenum mines in southern Norway out of action, the use of Americans was at one stage proposed.¹⁴⁴ In February 1943, OSS was offered the opportunity to contribute to Operation Midhurst, a plan to attack the frostfilet factories at Hammerfest and Melba in northern Norway. The Norwegians approved the operation and although OSS initially received its invitation to take part with ‘alacrity’ there were bureaucratic difficulties. The mission was, however, eventually cancelled due to local operational difficulties.¹⁴⁵

After the inception of OSS, William Donovan also began to examine the possibility of preparing groups of uniformed guerrilla soldiers recruited from ethnic Americans or foreign nationals, which could be used to operate behind enemy lines in areas specific to their language skills. This led in May 1943 to the setting up of OSS Operational Groups (OGs) Branch.¹⁴⁶ In July 1942 the American War Department had also constituted the 99th Infantry Battalion (Separate), which would be made up of

¹⁴² No suitable equipment was available in Britain. PRO: memo from JFM Whiteley (GS DAC of S, G-3), to COS, ref. 17240/4/Ops (c), 30 November 1944 in WO219/2381.

¹⁴³ PRO: internal memo from OSS HQ, European Theatre of Operations, to Commanding General, United States Strategic Air Force, ref. 4500/481, 18 March 1945 in HS2/6.

¹⁴⁴ PRO: telegram from AD/U (W.J. Keswick) to GM (Col. Frank), 20 October 1942 in HS2/134.

¹⁴⁵ After herring and cod oil were rejected as economic targets in Norway, both SOE and Norwegian authorities turned their attention toward the frostfilet factories. This operation was therefore not a response by SOE, as has been claimed, to an OSS desire to become active in Norway. ‘Midhurst’ was cancelled due to the ‘unhealthy state’ of the northwest coast of Norway, the shortening hours of darkness, and the possible loss of the submarine ‘Uredd’ on Operation Seagull. PRO: memo from D/CD (0) (Major General Colin McV. Gubbins) to MG, ref. DCDO/573, 13 February 1943. Minutes of a meeting held in room 362, Norgeby House, 20 February 1943, to discuss Operation Midhurst. Memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to MG, ref. SN/482, 28 February 1943, all in HS2/196. Letter from M/CD (Major General Colin. McV. Gubbins), (date unknown but probably March 1943) in HS2/219. J. Jakub, *Spies and Saboteurs: Anglo-American Collaboration and Rivalry in Human Intelligence Collection and Special Operations 1940-45*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 94-95.

¹⁴⁶ Smith, *The Shadow Warriors*, p. 162. Dear, *Sabotage and Subversion*, p. 168.

either Norwegian citizens or Norwegian speaking American citizens. From the summer of 1943, this unit became the source of recruits for a Norwegian uniformed guerrilla unit called OSS Norwegian Operational Group (NORSO).¹⁴⁷

Liaison between the Norwegian military authorities and OSS in the USA was established from early 1943 and with the NORSO group from that summer.¹⁴⁸ In December 1943, however, this unit, composed of eighty-four men and twelve officers, sailed for the UK. After its arrival it was temporarily housed, equipped and trained at Forest Lodge, part of STS 26 near Aviemore. By April it had been divided into two groups and a Field Service HQ and totalled 11 officers and 80 men.¹⁴⁹ Whilst it was accepted that NORSO was technically a 'Commando' group for use behind enemy lines and therefore primarily designed for 'D-Day' operations in Europe,¹⁵⁰ SOE's Norwegian section wanted to make use of this additional manpower in Norway. After some deliberation, therefore, it was decided to use the Americans for Operation Barter, a proposed attack against the pyrite mines on the island of Stord south of Bergen. SOE, FO, and SO jointly prepared plans, but after some acrimony with William Donovan over the use of the American sub-chasers, it was eventually accepted that there was a lack of suitable transport and the operation was cancelled.¹⁵¹ 'Barter', however, indicates that SOE saw NORSO as a means through which it could continue its attacks against important economic targets close to the Norwegian seaboard, particularly at a time when due to the preparations for Overlord it could no longer rely on the support of COHQ.

¹⁴⁷ The 99th Infantry Battalion was constituted on 10 July 1942 with an authorised strength of around 1000 men. Eventually many Norwegians, mostly exiles, gathered at Camp Hale in Colorado to train in mountain warfare. This unit was earmarked from an early stage for Norway's liberation. The Norwegian OG was activated in July 1943, after which they received training in such activities as demolition. See: Heimark, *The OSS Norwegian Special Operations Group in World War II*, pp. 5-8. NHM: B. Langeland, "'Rype": the Norwegian Special Operations Group', (Unpublished, 1975), in FO IV archive, boks 144.

¹⁴⁸ In February 1943, Lt. Col. Stromholtz was attached to the OSS in Washington. In July Colonel Munthe-Kaas replaced him. Between August 1943 and February 1944 three Norwegian officers were attached to NORSO. NHM: note from Lt. Col. B. Øen to Major G. Brewer, ref. J. No., 15 February 1943. Letter from General Hansteen to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 7 July 1943, and note from Captain L. Tønstad to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. 001148, 15 July 1943, all in FO IV archive, boks 32, mappe 6-A-2.

¹⁴⁹ PRO: memo from SOE/SO HQ London, to G-3 (Ops Div SHAEF), 25 April 1944 in WO219/2380. Heimark, *The OSS Norwegian Special Operations Group in World War II*, pp. 13 & 15.

¹⁵⁰ PRO: letter from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/921, 6 January 1944 in HS2/234.

¹⁵¹ PRO: memo from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to CD (Major General Colin McV. Gubbins), copy to D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. ADE/2094, 4 February 1944. Draft letter to W. Donovan from Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg, ref. HNS/900A, 9 February 1944 and W. Donovan's reply, ref. WJD/KEH, 10 February, all in HS2/234.

In May 1944, however, NORSO was allocated to post D-Day activities in France, although they were not actually committed until 19 August. Consequently, despite protests from Scotco, who wanted them for 'Rankin B' preparations, the case of a sudden German withdrawal from Norway, the unit was at least temporarily, not available for operations in Norway.¹⁵² This did not, however, end OSS support for SOE and Norwegian activities, particularly in northern Norway. In spring 1944, in an effort to obtain much needed equipment for Milorg groups in the counties of Troms and Nordland contact was made between the MI IV office at the Norwegian Legation and the Westfield Mission in Stockholm, which was seen as a potential source for these supplies.¹⁵³ It was, therefore, another attempt to tap American resources that led to the 'Sepals/Perianth' plan to establish bases along the Swedish border that under the cover of an intelligence operation and with the support of C-Bureau, the Swedish Intelligence Service, would act as supply points. By mid September 1944, two bases, 'Sepals' and 'Sepals I', and three field parties 'Perianth' and 'Perianth I and II', were established in northern Sweden close to the Norwegian border in the area of Narvik.¹⁵⁴ OSS paid for most of the cost of setting up and running these bases, as well as supplying the initial two and half tons of arms and equipment.¹⁵⁵

After German forces had withdrawn from Finland into northern Norway in November 1944, however, the military importance of these bases increased and they were no longer simply involved in supporting local resistance groups or collecting intelligence. Their role was widened to include the sabotage of enemy fuel, ammunition dumps, and its communications in the area.¹⁵⁶ It was also agreed that

¹⁵² PRO: SHAEF staff minute sheet, ref. 17240/4/ops, 11 May 1944. Memo from W. B. Smith COS, to GOC-in-C Scottish Command, ref. 17240/4/Ops (c), 15 July 1944. Memo to GOC-in-C Scottish Command, ref. 17240/4/Ops (c), 19 August 1944, all in WO219/2380.

¹⁵³ Håkon Kyllingmark had been involved in the military resistance in northern Norway but in 1944 he was forced to flee to Stockholm. He became the District Specialist within MI IV with responsibility for organising Milorg forces in the north. He made contact with Hans Ericksen ('Vaudeville') at the 'Westfield Mission'. See: G. Pedersen, *Militer motstand i nord 1940-1945*, (Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1982), p. 126.

¹⁵⁴ NHM: memo from DS/US (Lt. Cmdr. F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen), via Apollo (Major Brewer) (Copy for DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. N/65/V, 17 June 1944. Memo to DS/US (Lt. Cmdr F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen), via Apollo (Major Brewer) copy for DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. N/99/V, 14 July 1944. Orders to Lt. Håkon Kyllingmark, 29 July 1944, all in SOE archive, boks 46, mappe 40-4-11.

¹⁵⁵ NHM: note from 'Vaudeville' (Hans Ericksen) to DS/US (Lt. Cmdr. F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen), ref. N/119/0, 10 August 1944 in SOE archive, boks 46, mappe 40-4-11. Pedersen, *Militer motstand i nord 1940-1945*, p. 131.

¹⁵⁶ PRO: 'Directive for Sabotage Operations' to Commanding Officer, Sepals Groups, from SFHQ, 16 November 1944, in HS2/235.

three new bases should be set up on Swedish territory.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, it was difficult to supply these bases and by the end of the year only a few handguns had been delivered and no sabotage material.¹⁵⁸ The only effective way to equip these remote locations, which were 300 kilometres from the nearest Swedish railhead, was by airdrop. Consequently, in early November, SFHQ contacted the American 492nd Bombardment Group (H), but was told that there were no suitable aircraft. After this OSS became involved and in December wrote to the 'Commanding General, United States Strategic Air Forces' in Britain, and asked for long range aircraft to be made available, but apparently with no success.¹⁵⁹ Despite the involvement of the Swedish Intelligence Services, the Swedish government had also not been informed of these operations and it was 10 March 1945 before permission was received to transport military material from Britain to Bromma airfield outside Stockholm.¹⁶⁰ Prior to this, supplies, arms and equipment were flown from the UK in Norwegian diplomatic bags, and although some of it eventually got through to the bases, it was a trickle and not the significant flow of material that was required.

Eventually six bases were established in Sweden close to the county of Nordland: 'Sepals' I, II, and III, 'Sepals Gorgon', 'Freethorpe' and 'Coton'. Altogether about eighty men worked from these camps carrying out a range of activities including sabotage, gathering intelligence, and supporting local Milorg forces in preparation for the liberation. Nevertheless, even after the flow of supplies to the area increased, by the time of the German capitulation many of the Milorg groups in the region were still largely unarmed. Nevertheless, the 'Sepals' operations illustrate again how OSS was seen as a source of arms and equipment for activities in this theatre, although even with American support operating in such a remote border area in the north of Norway proved extremely problematic.¹⁶¹

SOE also looked to American assistance for its operations elsewhere in Norway. After completing its work in France, NORSO returned to England, although

¹⁵⁷ FOIV/154, Sepals 1 Op. 10, report dated London 13 November 1942, cited in Pedersen, *Militær motstand i nord*, p. 156.

¹⁵⁸ Pedersen, *Militær motstand i nord*, p. 134.

¹⁵⁹ PRO: paper from OSS to Commanding General United States Air Forces, attention Chief of Staff, ref. 7010/1/364, 7 Decemebr 1944 in HS2/235.

¹⁶⁰ Note marked 'Bases' and memo to DS/US (G. Vetlesen) from SN/US (Brøgger), 10 March 1945, in SOE boks 46, cited in Pedersen, *Militær motstand i nord*, pp. 156-158.

¹⁶¹ Pedersen, *Militær motstand i nord 1940-1945*, pp. 159-162, 163-165, 177.

eventually more than half of the unit was shipped back to the USA.¹⁶² As early as September 1944, however, Scotco, SOE and SO had attempted to have the group assigned for railway sabotage. The original plan was to use two units of NORSO in northern Norway around Bodø to disrupt rail and highway transport, harass the enemy, destroy supplies and transmit intelligence.¹⁶³ But this came to nothing and the decision was taken to place them under the 'operational control' of Scotco in preparation for Operation Apostle, the plan to take control of Norway after a final German surrender.¹⁶⁴ In December 1944, however, after SHAEF authorised unrestricted operations against the Norwegian rail network, it was decided to make use of the remainder of the NORSO unit on operations in northern Norway, where it was felt the use of uniformed troops would not provoke a widespread German reaction.¹⁶⁵ By mid January the decision had been taken to 'despatch an OG of thirty men by air to attack the railway north of Trondheim'.¹⁶⁶ Consequently, a party of thirty six men under the command of Major William E. Colby, a future Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), was prepared for Operation Rype, an attack against the Norwegian rail network in the county of Troms. Unfortunately, only sixteen men were successfully dropped in March 1945, but they remained in the field until the liberation carrying out a small amount of sabotage as part of the widespread effort to delay German troop movement southwards. This was significant because it was ultimately the only example where OSS forces were used in active operations within Norway.¹⁶⁷ At a local operational level, therefore, the Americans only made a very small and largely ineffectual contribution to clandestine activities in Norway.

¹⁶² Langeland, "Rype": *The Norwegian Special Operations Group* in FO IV archive, boks 144, and Heimark, *The OSS Norwegian Special Operations Group in World War II*, p. 61.

¹⁶³ PRO: memo from Lt. Gen. Thorne to SHAEF, 12 September 1944 in WO219/2380. Memo from SFHQ, (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson & Lt. Cmdr F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen), to Colonel Joseph F. Haskell, Commanding Officer SO, OSS, ETOUSA, 16 September 1944 in HS2/235.

¹⁶⁴ PRO: telegram from SHAEF to SCOTCO, no. S63727, 25 October 1944 in HS2/234.

¹⁶⁵ On 8 December 1944, Col. J.H. Alms from SHAEF had discussions with HRH the Crown Prince of Norway and it was decided that the use of uniformed troops south of Trondheim was undesirable because Milorg wanted to strike a blow on its own and it was feared that the presence of uniformed troops might provoke a major German reaction. See: PRO: memo to AC of S, G-3 Division SHAEF Main, from SFHQ, 29 December 1944 in HS2/235. Memo from SFHQ to AC of G-3 Division, SHAEF, ref. MUS/2400/2/234, 14 December in HS2/234.

¹⁶⁶ PRO: minutes of meeting held at SFHQ, 16 January 1945, on Norwegian Resistance, ref. MUS/2211/2337, in HS2/235.

¹⁶⁷ NHM: SFHQ Report on dispatch of NORSO Group on Operational Missions to Chief, Scandinavian Section, SO Branch, OSS, and memo to DS/US (Lt. Cmdr. F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen) from 'Vaudeville' (Hans Ericksen) ref. N/397/0, 5 April 1945 in SOE archive, boks 144. Langeland, "Rype": *The Norwegian Special Operations Group* in FOIV archive, boks 144.

From the spring of 1943, the SO section of OSS was a subordinate partner in the triumvirate that included SOE and FO, which meant that it never attempted to operate independently in Norway. American involvement was confined to the provision of equipment and transportation, and its overall influence on SOE's plans and activities, although supportive, was therefore minimal. Even American power and resources could not overcome the many difficulties of operating in this peripheral theatre, especially in the north where distances and local conditions made it so difficult to sustain clandestine operations over a long period. Along with COHQ, PWE, and the Norwegian military authorities, however, OSS became part of the wide collaborative effort that was behind special operations in Norway, and which altogether had a largely favourable and expansive impact on SOE's plans for this theatre.

Conclusion

SOE did not operate alone in Norway, and many of its activities in this theatre were either assisted by other organisations or were a collective effort. Its policy for Norway also recognised that through collaboration it could help to increase the military pressure on Germany. Consequently, apart from the eventual partnership it forged with the Norwegian military authorities and Milorg, SOE also worked with the other new British and American organisations created after 1939 to undertake subversive and clandestine operations across occupied Europe. It therefore never set out to work in isolation and was fully aware that it was part of a joint military effort.

All the sections of this chapter also demonstrate that it was the coming together of several factors that eventually shaped the development and implementation of many aspects of SOE's plans for Norway. *Coup de main* and propaganda operations were strategic, but often reliant on the ability of SOE to work alongside other organisations for their implementation. The nature of this co-operation differed, however, depending on the type of operation or the circumstances within which it developed. SOE's most effective and significant working relationship in Norway was with COHQ, which shared SOE's eagerness to carry out attacks against economic and military targets along the Norwegian seaboard and inland. The Norwegian authorities also became an active partner in these operations as they saw this as the best way of protecting national interests whilst at the same time assisting in

the war against Germany. Co-operation between PWE, SOE, and the Norwegian authorities was, however, more problematic because of the political nature of propaganda operations. Consequently, it took a long time to reach agreement over the form of these operations and the circumstances within which they could be carried out. Finally, Norway was a SOE sphere of operations and therefore OSS always had a junior and largely supportive role in the theatre. It was never permitted to act independently, although it provided important material support.

It was, however, not only relations with the new organisations that shaped SOE policy and operations in Norway, but also relations with the long established and traditional armed forces. The RAF, USAAF, and RN took a relatively small but significant interest in Norway, but, as the next chapter will show, despite their reservations over this new organisation, from late 1940 they worked closely with SOE on a number of undertakings and were therefore also an important influence on its plans and activities in this theatre.

CHAPTER SIX

SOE AND THE REGULAR ARMED FORCES OPERATING IN NORWAY 1940-1945: AN UNEXPECTED PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

The Royal Navy (RN), the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) and the Royal Air Force (RAF), for a combination of operational and strategic reasons, along with SOE and the other new clandestine organisations, also took an active military interest in Norway. There is, however, a view that the 'professional military' at the highest level was particularly sceptical toward SOE and had little appreciation of what it was attempting to achieve.¹ Therefore, there was the potential for a conflict of interest within this theatre of operations, which could have had a detrimental impact on SOE's plans. In Norway, however, SOE often worked closely with both the RN and RAF in carrying out attacks against important military and economic targets, and therefore rather than being undermined by difficult relations it was once more able to broaden its effort through collaboration.

Co-operation was again based on the shared strategic aim: to make Norway a continual strain on the German war effort. Through developing separate working relationships with the RAF and RN, SOE was in different ways able to assist in the implementation of this objective. Although strategic bombing in this theatre was very limited, it was often carried out either in partnership with SOE, which provided intelligence on targets, or independently after agreement had been reached that a particular site was deemed to be more suitable for an air attack than a local sabotage operation. Throughout the war in Europe the Admiralty also had powerful reasons for taking an interest in Norwegian coastal waters. It was an important route for transporting both war materials and enemy forces, and from early 1942 was the location of the bulk of Germany's surface fleet, including the 52,600 ton battleship, the *Tirpitz*, which exceeded the most modern British capital ships in her combination of speed, size, and power.² Consequently, the RN carried out a series of operations against economic and military targets in Norwegian waters, particularly enemy

¹ Foot, *The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 31-32. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 40.

² Barnett, *Engage the Enemy more Closely*, pp. 253, 394.

shipping, often in close partnership with SOE, which provided intelligence, recruits, and specialist equipment. SOE also undertook its own operations in collaboration with or on behalf of the RN, often because more established methods had failed or were deemed unsuitable.

SOE's policy and operations in Norway were bolstered by the largely beneficial relationship that it had with the regular armed forces. Its activities, contrary to previous assertions,³ were also not significantly hindered by its distinctive relationship with the Special Intelligence Service (SIS), which was very active in Norway from the summer of 1940. Although SIS, which was responsible through its agents for collecting military intelligence from the occupied countries, was not one of the regular armed services, it had a particularly close relationship to the Admiralty with regard to Norway. It was given strategic priority over SOE in northwest Europe, a position that was formalised for Norway in early 1943, but this never seriously curtailed SOE operations in this theatre. The two organisations often co-operated, both organisationally and at a local level.

The Norwegian government also had an involvement in and an impact upon many of these collaborative activities. It endeavoured to have some operations curtailed or at least restricted to targets that had been approved by all parties. This was particularly the case with air attacks, which could have a disproportionate impact on the local population and therefore significant political ramifications. Overall, however, its contribution was again largely supportive and its provision of men, materials, and local intelligence was often vital for the successful completion of many of the joint Allied operations within this theatre.

From the beginning working with the regular armed services was part of SOE's plans for Norway and the many joint operations that it took part in are evidence of the effort it made to implement this aspect of its policy. The nature and consequence of its relationship with SIS, RN, and RAF differed, however, and therefore it is best to examine each case separately. The first section of this chapter will analyse SOE and SIS relations in Norway. It will show that at both an organisational and local operational level they managed a level of collaboration that ensured that SIS interests did not significantly interfere with or hinder SOE's activities in this theatre.⁴

³ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945*, p. 130.

⁴ I. Herrington, 'The SIS and SOE in Norway 1940-1945: Conflict or Co-operation?', *War in*

The second section will consider the relationship between SOE and the RN, particularly through the Shetlands Base and ACOS, and show that a shared strategic and military interest in Norwegian coastal waters meant that they co-ordinated activities and collaborated on numerous operations, especially against enemy shipping. They also received significant assistance from the Norwegian authorities, initially from their naval staff, but also from early 1942 through FO.

The final section will examine SOE's relations with both the RAF and USAAF. This will show that from autumn 1940, SOE recognised that an important constituent of its activities in Norway would be to assist strategic bombing operations against economic and military targets. It was not a choice between sabotage or bombing as they were both seen as valuable strategic tools: it was the target that invariably decided which medium was used. The Norwegian authorities, however, were particularly anxious to ensure that bombing was employed sparingly, although rather paradoxically, through their close relationship with SOE, they were not averse to calling on support from the RAF for their own political needs, even if this caused considerable harm to the local population. What links the sections of this chapter, however, is that they all show how a substantial share of SOE's operations in Norway was shaped by not only strategic and political factors, but also by its ability to collaborate with the regular armed services that in this theatre do not appear to have had any 'lack of sympathy' for SOE's 'irregular operations'.⁵

I

SOE and SIS in Norway: Ship Watching and Sabotage manage to Co-exist

SIS, established in 1909 as the foreign section of the Secret Service Bureau and responsible for espionage and counter-intelligence was very active in Norway between 1940 and 1945.⁶ It recruited over 200 agents and sent 190 operations to the country to obtain and through wireless telegraphy (W/T) send back military intelligence to Britain.⁷ The chief duty of SIS in Norway 'was to provide shipping

History, vol.9, (1), January 2002, pp. 82-110.

⁵ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945*, p.40.

⁶ F.H. Hinsley [et al], *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, vol. I, (London: HMSO, 1979), pp. 16-17.

⁷ The total number of SIS agents that Berit Nøkleby describes as those it 'called its own' plus those that were openly a telegraphist or the head of a station, was 206, some of which were recruited but never used. Altogether, 187 agents can be identified through their operational name, place and time. The 190 operations include delivery of agents, courier operations, and provision of supplies, although not

intelligence',⁸ and most of its radio stations were situated along the coast, particularly around Trondheim,⁹ the main German naval base in Norway, and where the *Tirpitz* was berthed during eight of the first fourteen months of its stay in Norwegian waters.¹⁰

From the summer of 1940, SIS agents were sent to Norway¹¹ followed soon afterwards by SOE teams. This dual interest and activity in the country continued over the following years within a context that included a battle for influence and control between the two organisations at a higher level that at times threatened the very existence of SOE.¹² Nevertheless, despite the natural conflict between intelligence gathering and special operations,¹³ and the strategic priority accorded to SIS in northwest Europe,¹⁴ the two organisations operated in Norway with relatively little conflict and both at an organisational and local operational level there is significant evidence of co-operation. For SOE this meant that its ability to pursue its aims in Norway, particularly attacks against economic and military targets, was not significantly degraded by the priority accorded to SIS, and at times a degree of co-ordination and collaboration even assisted SOE activities.

From the autumn of 1940, SOE's Scandinavian section gradually began to communicate and share intelligence with its counterpart within SIS. The initial impetus behind this was the contact that both organisations made with the Norwegian authorities in London during summer 1940 in an effort to enlist new recruits.¹⁵ This

the evacuation of agents. See: Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 183, 165.

⁸ PRO: HS2/174, the Norwegian Section History.

⁹ A list of SIS wireless stations in Norway is available within SIS archives in NHM in Oslo. Many radio stations were also established in Oslo, inland, and even across the Swedish border, and sent a range of intelligence including details of German troop movements and of railway traffic between Oslo and Trondheim. R. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten 1940-1945*, (Oslo: NHM, 1994), pp. 32-40.

¹⁰ From 16 January 1942, the *Tirpitz* was close to Trondheim. On 6 March it sailed north and until October it remained either around Narvik or in Altafjord. On 24 October it returned to Trondheim where it remained until 14 March 1943. See: PRO: letter from J. K. Cordeaux, (SIS) to Col. R. Neville, (COHQ), ref. N/Ops/209, 23 March 1943, in DEFE2/449. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 218-220.

¹¹ The first joint SIS/Norwegian operation sent in from Britain in June 1941 was 'Hardware'. This was a hurried and improvised effort and although the station had radio contact between 10 June and 7 August 1940, it was quickly broken up and the 18 people that were eventually behind the operation were arrested. See: Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten 1940-1945*, p. 13.

¹² JIC (43) 517, 22 December 1943, cited in Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 137-139.

¹³ J.G. Beevor, *SOE: Recollections and Reflections 1940-1945*, (London: Bodley Head, 1981), p. 73.

¹⁴ PRO: JIC (42) 156 (0), 29 April 1942, in CAB 84/85, and COS (42) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Executive Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68.

¹⁵ On 23 July 1940, the Norwegian Foreign Minister met Anthony Eden, British Minister of War, which led to meetings with Major Foley and Colonel Ramsden from SIS and an agreement to work together. Initially SIS worked with a small department within the Norwegian Foreign Office called the *Utenriksdepartementets E-kontor*, the Foreign Office Intelligence Office, (UD/E), which in January

eventually led both of them to work with FD-E, which in January 1941 under Captain Finn Nagell had been made responsible for contact with the ‘English Secret Services’.¹⁶ Both SIS and SOE had interviewed Nagell shortly after his arrival in Britain,¹⁷ and therefore from an early stage and through that year he was in contact with and worked with both organisations. It was probably this tripartite relationship that created a closeness between the organisations that in January 1941 enabled J. B. Newill in SIS to send to SOE a report entitled ‘Military Organisation in Norway’, which had been produced by one of his agents recently in the country. It included details of the agent’s contact with a member of the emerging military resistance movement,¹⁸ and was not the last time during 1941 that SOE received important intelligence on Milorg from SIS. By the following summer, after it feared that the Germans had penetrated the leadership of Milorg, SOE readily turned to SIS for help.¹⁹ All of this is an early indication of a preparedness to co-operate and share intelligence.

A second factor that helped to increase contact between these two organisations was their shared use of the Shetlands Base. It was SIS officer, Captain L.H. Mitchell, who had worked in Oslo during the winter of 1939-1940,²⁰ who initially commanded the base, and in the beginning he kept an eye on where SOE and SIS trips were heading, ‘thus avoiding a clash’.²¹ This process was undermined, however, when in July 1941, SIS opened its own naval base at Peterhead in Scotland. It did not supply SOE details of the operations that it despatched from this base, unless requested. Therefore, from the summer of 1941 there was the possibility that both organisations could send agents to the same location at the same time,²² which in the spring of 1942 was believed to have been the cause of the major tragedy that occurred in the small west coast settlement of Televåg near Bergen. A SIS operation

was incorporated into FD-E, under the Norwegian Minister of Defence. See: Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁶ *Den Norske regjerings virksomhet fra 9 april 1940 til 22 juni 1945*, vol. IV, *Forsvarsdepartementet*, p. 102.

¹⁷ PRO: interview with Captain Finn Nagell, 21 November 1940, in HS2/238.

¹⁸ SIS agent was Sverre Midtskau, who whilst working in Norway on behalf of the Norwegian government and SIS had met John Rognes. PRO: report entitled ‘Military Organisation in Norway’ from J. B. Newill, in HS2/228. FKA, Nagells arkiv 88.2, cited in Riste, *London Regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 111.

¹⁹ NHM: ‘Consolidated Progress reports of S Section’ nos. 33 & 34-weeks ending 16 and 23 July 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

²⁰ M. Smith, *Foley: The Spy who Saved 10,000 Jews*, (London: Coronet Books, 1999), p. 180.

²¹ PRO: memo from SN/S (Major F. W. Ram) to D/CD (Charles Hambro), 2 May 1942, in HS2/136.

²² *Ibid.*

from Peterhead and a SOE operation from the Shetlands in quick succession sailed to similar points on the island of Sotra, where Televåg is situated. Information obtained soon afterwards indicated that SIS operation had attracted local attention and therefore when SOE team arrived the suspicions of the local security police were already aroused. This ultimately led to a clash between two SOE agents and the Gestapo, with horrifying consequences for the local population.²³ This terrible incident, however, had one positive result in that it induced SIS in future to 'exchange lists of projected trips in advance',²⁴ and in September 1942 SOE re-affirmed this liaison to avoid any future 'crossing of lines' as far as transport and reception were concerned.²⁵

A further indication of a growing working relationship between SOE and SIS was their willingness to exchange both staff officers and more significantly agents who had already worked in the field. For example, in August 1943, Lieutenant Chaworth-Musters, who had helped establish the Norwegian section of SOE and was therefore a significant figure within the organisation, moved to SIS with the support of the organisation's senior hierarchy.²⁶ There are also several examples of men who began their career working for SIS in Norway, either as agents sent from England or as agents recruited within the country, who eventually moved on to work for SOE.²⁷ Perhaps the best example is Knut Haukelid, who through his friendship with SIS agent Sverre Midtskau began his wartime career working for British intelligence in Norway. On arriving in England in 1941, however, Haukelid, anxious for more active work and with the recommendation of SIS, joined SOE and became a member of its

²³ One of the SOE agents was killed and one captured and later executed. Two Gestapo officers were killed, which resulted in the execution of 18 Norwegians, all the men in Televåg between 16 and 65 being deported to Sachsenhausen in Germany, and all the houses in the town, over 300, being burnt to the ground. PRO: 'Report on Operation Anchor and Penguin', from SN/A (Malcolm Munthe) to AD/S (Lt. Colonel H.N. Sporborg), in HS2/136. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 156-158.

²⁴ PRO: HS7/174, the Norwegian Section History.

²⁵ PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Long-term Policy in Norway', ref. JSW/1400, 21 September 1942 in HS2/128.

²⁶ The movement of staff officers between the two organisations was not unusual, as is shown by the example of P.L. Johns. Chaworth-Musters' move had the full approval of Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins. Notes from the Personal File of J. L. Chaworth-Musters supplied by the SOE Adviser at the Foreign Office. P. L. Johns, *Within Two Cloaks*, (London: William Kimber, 1979).

²⁷ Bjørn Rørholt began working for SIS in Norway as part of the 'Skylark B' team. He eventually returned to England, but at the beginning of 1942 went back to Norway to set up SIS station 'Lerken'. He eventually fell out with SIS and joined SOE, working initially at SOE's STS no 52, at Thame Park in Oxfordshire. Bernard Haavardsholm also began working for SIS and Norwegian government in 1940. He eventually returned to Norway in October 1941 as the organiser for SOE operation 'Arquebus'. See: B. A. Rørholt, *Amatørspionen Lerken*, (Oslo: Hjemmenes Forlag, 1985), p. 178. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vol. I, pp. 92-93 & 106-107. PRO: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, to Major John Rognes, 2 July 1942, in HS2/139.

‘Gunnarside’ team that attacked the heavy water plant in Vemork in southern Norway in February 1943.²⁸

The passing of intelligence by SIS, the attempts to co-ordinate the North Sea crossings, and the movement of agents from SIS to SOE, all indicate that SOE and SIS Norwegian Sections were to a some degree working in tandem, when possible prepared to assist each other, and not adverse to each other’s existence. Even in the early stages of the war, therefore, SIS’s intolerance of SOE at a senior level does not appear to have had a detrimental effect on SOE’s plans for Norway. Moreover, it is possible to argue that the relationship between the two organisations ultimately had a positive impact, because the willingness of both to share intelligence led to closer contact and a growing co-ordination of activities.

Lt. Col. Wilson, in his internal history of SOE’s Norwegian section, claims that there was ‘frequent intercommunication between the two sections’, and that although weekly meetings eventually failed, ‘information of any interest was passed immediately to SIS’. He does, however, criticise SIS for not being as helpful. This appears to be unjustified.²⁹ In January 1941, SOE’s agent, Odd Starheim (Operation Cheese), was landed by submarine off the coast of southern Norway. He soon established wireless contact and sent back a stream of intelligence that contained details of potential sabotage targets, German troop dispositions, and importantly for SIS shipping movements including information on the location of the German battleship *Bismarck*. Although at this time all wireless traffic was sent using SIS equipment and intelligence had to be passed to it before general circulation, SOE still made an effort to contact SIS and urged it to make immediate use of the material provided by Starheim.³⁰

SOE and SIS also both took an active interest in the production of heavy water at the Norsk Hydro plant at Vemork, which led them to communicate regularly and work together on the issue. In the spring of 1941, a SIS station, ‘Skylark B’, which

²⁸ Midtskau was originally sent into Norway on behalf of SIS and the Norwegian authorities in summer 1940, returning to Britain the following January. He was dropped back into Norway in February 1942. Haukelid knew Midtskau and began working for him at the Trondheim submarine base collecting intelligence that appears to have been sent to England via the ‘Skylark B’ station set up outside Trondheim. Haukelid, *Skis Against The Atom*, pp. 39-42 & 54-55. S. Midtskau, *London svarer ikke*, (Oslo: E.G. Mortensen Forlag, 1968), p. 111.

²⁹ PRO: HS7/174, the Norwegian Section History.

³⁰ PRO: memo from A/DA (Charles Hambro) to D/T, 17 March 1941, and telegrams from ‘Cheese’ ref. CXG2 and CXG3, 1 June and 10 June 1941 in HS2/150. File 1/470/14 cited in Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 95.

operated in and around Trondheim, was used to request up-to-date information on the site,³¹ and from this point SIS made a concerted effort to obtain intelligence on Vemork, often with the help of SOE. Professor Leif Tronstad and Jomar Brun, who were the key figures in the provision of intelligence and planning of operations against the plant, worked closely with both Eric Welsh, head of SIS's Norwegian section and its scientific liaison officer with DSIR, and Lt. Colonel Wilson of SOE. They effectively served as a bridge between the two organisations.³² Moreover, in April 1943, Lt. Colonel Wilson wrote that with regard to Operation Gunnerside, SIS was 'fully cognisant of this operation beforehand, as a result of information personally conveyed to them by me'.³³ From this point SOE, using the intelligence supplied by its 'Swallow' W/T station, regularly sent information to SIS on heavy water along with details of the final operations carried out against its production and transportation.³⁴

This stream of intelligence was not, however, one way, but also flowed from the offices of SIS to SOE. The furnishing of information about Milorg was only the beginning. Over the next four years there were several examples of SIS forwarding intelligence provided through its radio stations in Norway, on to SOE. SIS station 'Theta' supplied details on the fate of the two SOE agents 'Anchor' and Penguin', who had clashed with the Gestapo outside Televåg.³⁵ SOE was informed of the arrest of its 'Archer' W/T operator and of the fate of Operation Martin by SIS.³⁶ SIS was

³¹ The accounts of Rørholt and Jones are contradictory. Jones claims that he reacted to a telegram from Norway about heavy water, whilst Rørholt, a member of the 'Skylark B' team, claims that it responded to a request from the Home Station for information on heavy water. The contact for the 'Skylark B' team was Professor Leif Tronstad, who at the time was a leading figure in the emerging military resistance in Trøndelag. Rørholt, *Amatørspionen Lerken*, p. 83. R. V. Jones, *Most Secret War*, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 1998), pp. 205-206. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vol. I, p. 152. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, p. 14.

³² Welsh had worked in Norway prior to the outbreak of war. At the end of April 1940 he returned to England and in May 1941 became head of the Norwegian section of SIS. His scientific background as a chemical engineer was the reason he was eventually chosen as the link between SIS and DSIR. PRO: letter from DSIR (Michael Perrin) to Gorell Barnes, (Privy Council Office), 1 December 1942, in CAB126/171. Letter to 8627 (Nielsen) in SOE Stockholm from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. N. 587, 4 October 1943, in HS2/187. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, p. 37. Jones, *Most Secret War*, pp. 307-309, 472-474. FO II's London arkiver, Welsh til Nagell, 20 October 1943, in Section V's arkiv, cited in Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 34-35.

³³ PRO: memo from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. SN/828, 20 April 1943 in HS2/186.

³⁴ PRO: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Broadway (SIS), ref. JSW/296, 23 October 1943 in HS2/187. Letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Lt. Cdr. E. Welsh, ref. JSW/1532, 28 March 1944 in HS2/188.

³⁵ PRO: telegrams from 'Theta' and note from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to LB (someone within SIS), 5 May 1942, in HS2/136. K. Ottosen, *Theta Theta*, (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1983), p. 56.

³⁶ PRO: message from 'Upsilon', telephoned 10 April from 'C' in HS2/161.

fully aware of 'Martin' because several months previously both organisations had agreed to keep each other informed of their operations.³⁷ By June 1943, therefore, Lt. Colonel Wilson was able to write that liaison with SIS was 'better' and that 'advance notice of operations is exchanged monthly, and weekly meetings are held'.³⁸

All these examples indicate a growing level of co-operation, co-ordination and communication between SOE's and SIS's Norwegian sections. This is corroborated by the degree of collaboration that developed at the local operational level. Both organisations had clandestine wireless operators working in Norway, often in close proximity, communicating with the Home Station back in Britain. But instead of working in isolation they often supported each other. In October 1942, SOE's W/T operator 'Plover', Per Solnordal, took over SIS station 'Beta', and using its equipment and signals plan operated it for several weeks on behalf of both SIS and SOE.³⁹ At the beginning of 1943, SOE station 'Swan' sent a message on behalf of SIS station 'Orion', which had trouble with its set, and SIS replied to 'Orion' via 'Swan'.⁴⁰ In 1945, when SOE station 'Snowflake' had problems with its set, the nearby SIS station 'Roska' helped by sending telegrams.⁴¹

This sharing of stations was not just a consequence of expediency but also the result of direct requests from SIS. In November 1943, SIS asked if it could send a ship watcher to link up with SOE wireless station 'Arquebus'. In September 1943, whilst preparations were being made to send SOE's 'Redwing' team to the Bergen area, SIS asked if it could be made available to them.⁴² Conditions in Norway, the small, isolated communities, meant that SOE and SIS teams often worked in the same area, shared the same contacts, and on occasion crossed lines.⁴³ Although SIS's policy was initially to set up wireless stations in isolation from the local community,

³⁷ The final report of the only survivor of 'Martin', Jan Baalsrud, was also passed to SIS. PRO: letter ref. NS/215, 26 March 1943 in HS2/161.

³⁸ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943, with paper entitled, 'SOE activities in Norway during 1943/1944', ref. JSW/1202, 26 June 1943 in HS2/218.

³⁹ NHM: minute to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. SA/85, 18 October 1942 in SOE archive, boks 14, mappe 13/2/1. PRO: Memo to DC/E from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), 11 January 1943 in HS2/245.

⁴⁰ PRO: telegram to 'Swan', 6 January 1943, cited in HS2/280, SOE war diary, Nov 42 – March 43.

⁴¹ Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vol. III, p. 429.

⁴² PRO: minute received from SIS, 4 November 1943, in HS2/139. 'Report on Operational Plans for Meeting of ANCC', 9 September 1943' in HS2/236.

⁴³ SOE operation 'Martin' and the SIS station 'Upsilon' shared the same contacts in the Troms region of northern Norway, initially unbeknown to each other, which caused a crossing of lines between the two. SOE team 'Antrum' established its radio station literally next door to SIS station 'Koppa' in the Ålesund district. For details see: PRO: memo headed 'Notes re. Martin', from SN/A (Captain P. F. S.

so-called 'hermit' stations, this proved impossible. It has been estimated that as many as 2000 Norwegians assisted SIS in Norway,⁴⁴ and its agents not only co-operated with SOE agents, but also with indigenous resistance and intelligence groups across the country.⁴⁵

The influence of relations with SIS on SOE's plans for Norway, as indicated by these numerous examples of co-operation and co-ordination at an organisational and local operational level, was therefore, despite the potential for conflict, often favourable. At the same time, however, SIS was given strategic priority over SOE in northwest Europe, including Norway, and it has been suggested that this limited certain of its activities in this theatre.⁴⁶ This does not appear to have been the case and SOE was able to implement all aspects of its policy, even attacks against economic and military targets through *coup de main* operations, without significant hindrance and despite the concerns of SIS.

When on 4 January 1943, COS confirmed that ACOS would be 'the co-ordinating authority for small operations on the Norwegian coast',⁴⁷ it was also agreed that 'where the proposed activities of SOE and SIS and minor raids' clashed, SIS would 'ordinarily be given priority'. In the future it would be the Admiralty, through ACOS, who would decide whether the activities of either COHQ or SOE prejudiced the security of SIS operations in Norway.⁴⁸ At a meeting held at Admiralty House in London on 28 May 1943 to discuss operations along the Norwegian coast, and which included representatives from the Admiralty, SIS, SOE, and COHQ, it was agreed by all parties that 'intelligence affecting movements of the German fleet' had top priority.⁴⁹ Notwithstanding this, however, and despite the many occasions that SIS

Douglas) to SN/A.1, 10 April 1943, in file HS2/161. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vol. I, p. 240.

⁴⁴ Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 184.

⁴⁵ As early as 1941, SIS station 'Skylark B' had made contact with Milorg and sent messages on its behalf. SIS also eventually worked closely with the indigenous intelligence organisation in Norway called 'XU', which collected static intelligence on German troop dispositions, numbers and fortifications. In November 1942, SIS sent two agents who were to make themselves available for XU. One of SIS's best known agents, Olaf Reed-Olsen, was sent to Norway in June 1943 to set up the radio station 'Aquarius', and the local XU groups in Stavanger, Egersund, and Flekkefjord helped to get him established and supplied him with intelligence. See: PRO: paper entitled 'Trondheim Organisations', 6 October 1941 in HS2/231. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten i Norge 1940-1945*, vol. II, p. 137, vol. III, pp. 344-345. O. Reed-Olsen, *Two Eggs on my Plate*, (London: Companion Book Club, 1954).

⁴⁶ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 130.

⁴⁷ PRO: letter from the Admiralty to ACOS, the C-in-C Rosyth, CCO, and the Admiral (Submarines), ref. M/P/D 0188/42, 4 November 1942 in DEFE2/616.

⁴⁸ PRO: COS (43) 3rd meeting, 4 January 1943 in CAB 70/59.

⁴⁹ See chapter five, p. 162. PRO: minutes of a meeting held in the war room, Admiralty House, 28 May 1943 in HS2/226.

objected to SOE operations along or near the Norwegian coast, it rarely got its own way. Therefore, the precedence conferred on SIS never resulted in a so-called 'ban' on SOE activities in this theatre.⁵⁰

In August 1943, SIS objected to Operation Feather, a planned SOE operation against the Orkla pyrite mines in southern Norway,⁵¹ but the operation eventually went ahead on the understanding that the party did not approach anywhere near the Trondheim fjord area. In December 1943, SIS objected to Operation Osprey, a plan to send a SOE party to the Stavanger area,⁵² but without success. SIS also opposed some of SOE's plans to attack enemy shipping in Norwegian coastal waters using kayaks and submersible vessels. In February 1944 it objected to Operation Vestige V, a plan to use kayaks to get close to and attach limpet mines to shipping in Sagvåg harbour, the transportation point for pyrites from the Willebø mines on the island of Stord.⁵³ The operation, however, after its details had been passed to SIS⁵⁴ and it had been referred to ACOS, was allowed to go ahead. It was ultimately a failure, but in a spirit of co-operation, the intelligence obtained during the operation was passed to SIS.⁵⁵ In August 1944, SOE decided that it would re-attempt the 'Vestige V' operation and SIS again protested. As it was about to land an agent in the vicinity at the same time its objection was upheld and the operation cancelled.⁵⁶ In 1944, SIS also opposed three of SOE's 'Salamander' operations; the attacks using the 'Sleeping Beauty' mini-submersible canoe against enemy shipping along the Norwegian coast. Five operations were proposed and two appear to have been cancelled due to SIS objections; two, however, went ahead and one was cancelled for local operational reasons.⁵⁷

These are all examples that show how, notwithstanding the priority accorded to it, SIS's attempts to restrict SOE operations, especially those along Norway's western seaboard, regularly failed. Therefore, even though SIS had strategic and local

⁵⁰ Kenneth Macksey uses the term 'C-ban' to describe SIS objections to operations on Norway's coast. K. Macksey, *The Story of Amphibious Raiding in World War II*, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1985), p. 158.

⁵¹ PRO: 'Report on Operational Plans for Meeting of ANCC', 12 August 1943 in HS2/236.

⁵² PRO: 'Report on Operational Plans for Meeting of ANCC', 9 December 1943 in HS2/236.

⁵³ PRO: Telegram to Lerwick, 22 February 1944 in HS2/209.

⁵⁴ PRO: letter to Broadway, 3 March 1944, in HS2/209.

⁵⁵ PRO: letter to Broadway with enclosed intelligence, 22 May 1944, in HS2/209.

⁵⁶ PRO: report on Vestige V and minute from SIS, ref. B/624, 28 July 1944, in HS2/209.

⁵⁷ SIS raised objections to 'Salamander' I, III, and IV. Operations I and III, never went ahead, IV was cancelled due to operational reasons, whilst II and V went ahead in September 1944. See: PRO: paper entitled, 'Salamander Operations', 6 September 1944, and letter from J. K. Cordeaux, (SIS) to the

operational priority, this did not significantly curtail SOE's capability in this theatre. There appears to be no evidence in either SOE archives in London or Oslo that any SOE *coup de main* operation against an industrial target in Norway was called off because of a SIS objection. The strategic importance placed on attacks against war materials and against enemy shipping using Norwegian waters meant that these operations reached their peak during 1943.⁵⁸

The relationship between SOE and SIS has previously been portrayed as two organisations in conflict. This does not appear to have been the case in regard to Norway. The activities of both these organisations occasionally led to the arrest of each other's agents and therefore the break up of operations, and in this theatre SIS was equally if not more culpable.⁵⁹ Close examination of correspondence between the two organisations also reveals that both made an effort to co-ordinate their activities and to co-operate. Their relationship was largely constructive, which within the context of this thesis means that SOE was able to pursue its plans for Norway without significant hindrance from and occasionally with the co-operation of SIS. Both organisations had important military tasks to carry out and conflict would have undermined their efforts. Collaboration was therefore the pragmatic path that they both decided to follow.

II

SOE and the Admiralty: New and Old combine in Norwegian Waters

The attention that SIS paid to Norway is an indication of the importance that the RN placed on intelligence on the movements of enemy shipping in this theatre.

Norwegian coastal waters and particularly the inner leads, the channel of water that runs between the many off-shore islands (skerries) and the coastline, where vessels can escape from the worst ravages of the North Sea,⁶⁰ were an important artery for both the transportation of war materials to Germany and for the movement of German

Director of Naval Intelligence, ref. NA/683, 23 September 1944, in ADM223/481.

⁵⁸ PRO: COS (43) 142, (0), 'Special Operations Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943 in CAB 80/68. 'Directive for Future sabotage Policy in Norway', ref. ADE/20, 31 May 1943 in HS2/233. See also Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-328.

⁵⁹ The Abwehr agent Otto Robsahm, who was recruited by SIS in Stockholm, caused immense damage to SOE. He contributed to the failure of Operation Performance, an attempt to sail Norwegian ships out of Swedish harbours and over to the UK, and which ultimately led to the death of sixteen men and imprisonment of a further 233. See: T. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter: Tysk etterretning I Norge 1939-1945*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2001), pp. 112-119.

⁶⁰ Norway is 1752 kilometres (approx. 1100 miles) long, but the total length of its coastline is 21,111 km (approx. 13,000 miles). B. Christophersen, *Norsk militær innsats ute og hjemme 1940-1945*, (Oslo: Royal Ministry of Defence Press and Information Service, 1972).

forces, especially after the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. In peacetime Germany had taken fourteen percent of Norway's exports, of which ninety seven percent by value, were sea-borne,⁶¹ and therefore attacking this artery was yet another way to subvert the enemy's war effort.

By early 1942, Norwegian waters had also become the location for both units of the German surface fleet and some of its U-boats. These were seen as a potential threat to maritime routes across the Atlantic and an immediate danger to the Allied convoys transporting important materials around the North Cape to the Soviet Union.⁶² Consequently, between late January 1942, when the first air attack was carried out against it, and November 1944 when it was finally put out of action, the *Tirpitz* became a major target for the RN. A total of fifteen direct attacks were carried out against the German battleship: of these seven were by the RAF, seven by the Fleet Air Arm, and one under the authority of the Flag Officer Submarines (FOS) using midget submarines (X-craft).⁶³ The protection of the Arctic convoys from the German fleet was, however, an additional unwelcome burden on Britain's over-stretched Home Fleet and added 'enormously to the Admiralty's global strategic problems'.⁶⁴

Norwegian coastal waters were not, however, only important to the RN. They were a gateway through which SOE sent many of its teams into Norway to carry out *coup de main* attacks or to organise local resistance groups. Moreover these coastal waters were the location of a series of SOE attacks against enemy shipping, and these sea-borne operations required naval assistance, either through the provision of transportation or technical support. Several of SOE's activities in or close to Norwegian waters were also a direct consequence of its assistance to the RN in operations against units of the German surface fleet, particularly the *Tirpitz*. After conventional methods failed, the RN was fully prepared to make use of more unorthodox means, including the employment of a selection of submersible vessels. SOE was then able to contribute by supplying intelligence, Norwegian volunteers, and

⁶¹ Medlicott, *The Economic Blockade*, vol. I, p. 153.

⁶² By May 1942 the German navy had one battleship, the *Tirpitz*, three heavy cruisers (Admiral Scheer, Admiral Hipper, and Lutzow), eight destroyers, four torpedo boats, and 20 U-boats located in the area between Trondheim and Kirkenes. See: KTB der OKW 1942, I, pp. 124-125, cited in Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 210.

⁶³ Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, pp. 219-220.

⁶⁴ According to Churchill in spring 1942 the 'elimination' of the 'Tirpitz', 'would profoundly affect the course of the war.' See: Defence Committee no. 7, 2 March 1942 in CAB 69/4, cited in Gilbert, *Road to Victory: Winston S. Churchill 1941-1945*, p. 70. Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely*, p. 695.

special equipment. Accordingly SOE's relationship with the RN was another important collaborative factor in shaping both its plans and many of its activities in this theatre.

Furthermore, co-operation between SOE and the RN was assisted by an important contribution from the Norwegian military authorities. The Royal Norwegian Navy, and from 1942, FO, became actively involved in SOE's operations against economic and military targets along the Norwegian seaboard through both the provision of vessels, and the supply of expertise and local intelligence. The Norwegian authorities were also less likely to oppose Allied operations in coastal waters, as unlike attacks on the mainland they were not liable to lead to severe consequences for the local population or resistance.

Only with the support and consent of ACOS, who had overall responsibility for many of the minor operations carried out from the Shetlands against targets close to the Norwegian seaboard or in its coastal waters, was SOE able to expedite the bulk of its sea-borne activities. From the autumn of 1940, with the setting up of the Shetlands Base, SOE had a good local working relationship with ACOS,⁶⁵ and when an independent Norwegian section was established in early 1942, Major F. W. Ram was given responsibility for liaison between the two parties.⁶⁶ Moreover, it does not appear that the Admiralty, through the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet, ever objected to or interfered with this relationship and often contributed to it by directly assisting many of SOE's sea-borne operations.

Toward the close of 1940 both the RN and SOE began to show an interest in applying economic pressure against Germany through interdicting the transportation of war materials through Norwegian coastal waters. Churchill's interest in hindering the movement of Swedish iron ore through Narvik and along the Norwegian coastline, which had begun in 1939, resurfaced in late 1940. On 22 and 26 December 1940, the Prime Minister wrote to the First Sea Lord pressing for the sowing of magnetic mines in the leads in an effort to stop the export of this important war material to Germany. The reply from the First Sea Lord was that the German ore traffic, was 'watched continuously'.⁶⁷ In early 1941, SOE also began to consider the possibility of

⁶⁵ See Appendix C, 'A History of the Shetlands Base Autumn 1939 to May 1945', pp. 319-322.

⁶⁶ NHM: 'Staff of Norwegian section, SOE: 1942-1945', in SOE archive, boks 10, mappe 10/5/23.

⁶⁷ PRO: letters to the First Sea Lord, 22 and 26 December, and the First Sea Lord's reply on 24 December, in PREM 3/328/6. Churchill, 'The Gathering Storm', vol. I, in *The Second World War*, pp. 420-433.

interrupting supplies of sulphur and ferrochrome from Norway, which led to two provisional plans, called 'Gertrude' and 'Landlubber'.⁶⁸ It was this shared strategic interest in Norwegian waters that ultimately led SOE and the RN to work together on a number of projects.

The first of these was Operation Maundy, a plan to use Norwegian fishing boats from the Shetlands to lay mines in the leads, thereby forcing enemy shipping into the open seas where it was vulnerable to naval attack. The first 'Maundy' operation left on 29 April 1941, and laid eleven of eighteen 'R-Type' mines provided by the Admiralty, which also loaned a Chief Petty Officer from Rosyth to assist preparations. A second operation left the Shetlands on 19 October 1941 with forty-two mines, which were laid on 21 October. A proposal in 1942 to use members of SOE team 'Lark', based in the Trondheim area, to mine the local fjords using a rowing boat was never carried out, and four further attempts to lay mines in 1944 using a submarine chaser failed due to bad weather.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, 'Maundy' was an early example of how SOE and the RN, with the help of Norwegian fishing vessels and crews operating out of the Shetlands Base, collaborated and were prepared to use 'irregular' methods in an attempt to attack enemy shipping in Norwegian waters.

In the spirit of 'Maundy' the more ambitious project called Operation Wallah was also put together.⁷⁰ It is an important example of how SOE, Admiralty, and Norwegian naval authorities were prepared to pool skills and resources in this case to paralyse 'as far as possible the German sea-borne traffic along the coast of Norway'.⁷¹ In July 1941, the Admiralty approved the plan and with the assistance of the Norwegian Naval Staff and *Notraship* (the Norwegian Shipping and Trade Mission) the SS *Anderson* was provided as the base for the operation. The RN also supplied two 'Q-ships', heavily armed merchant vessels, which would be used to intercept German shipping along the coast. It was also proposed that local Norwegian fishing boats should be purchased and used to sail into harbours and affix explosives to enemy ships. To assist collaboration a planning committee was set up and included

⁶⁸ PRO: 'Report on Position of Plans and Projects' as at 5 March 1941 in HS8/231.

⁶⁹ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', weeks ending 29 April, 7 May, 15 May 1941 in SOE archive boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. 'Operational Diary, August 1943-June 1944' in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/1b. PRO: 'Repetition of Operation Maundy', ref. NID/003552/41 in ADM223/481. Message from SN/S (Lt. Col. Ram, SOE) to SNL (Major L. H. Mitchell), no. 263, 24 February 1942 in HS2/159.

⁷⁰ See: Chapter Five, p. 154.

⁷¹ PRO: a minute from Mr Brittain to the British Treasury, 23 September 1941, in HS2/244.

representatives from the 'Q- ships', SOE, and Norwegian naval officers. In October 1941, the operation was placed under ACOS and in November under the C-in-C Home Fleet before it became part of Operation Anklet, which was eventually no more than a larger-scale but less ambitious version of 'Wallah'.⁷² An element of 'Wallah' was, however, resurrected in January 1942 when the two 'Q-ships' sailed from the Shetlands with the aim of attacking enemy shipping using Norwegian coastal waters. SOE supplied intelligence, an officer, army and navy personnel, arms, and explosives, but the ships were spotted by enemy aircraft and forced to return.⁷³

Collaboration between SOE and the RN also extended to joint operations against economic targets along or close to the Norwegian seaboard, especially the Norwegian fish industry. An early indication of this was Operation Almoner, a plan to seize the Norwegian herring fleet and German escorting trawlers working between Haugesund and Egersund off the southwest coast of Norway. The original request for the operation came from the Admiralty, but it was believed that SOE would play a role through providing the Norwegian seaman who would act as special armed guards. Although the COS approved the operation in 'principle', by 18 March it had been abandoned at the request of the Norwegian government;⁷⁴ the potential damage to an important industry was apparently too much for it to sanction.

Operation Hemisphere, however, the attack against a herring oil plant at Øksfjord in northern Norway went ahead a few weeks later. The party, consisting of ten Norwegian marines and one SOE agent, sailed on 8 April 1942 on the 'Mansfield', an ex-American destroyer belonging to the Norwegian navy, and returned on 15 April having completely destroyed the plant. Commander Frank Stagg from SOE conceived the plan, and SOE provided arms and explosives. Rear Admiral T. S. V. Phillips, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff and Captain E. C. Danielsen, the Norwegian Naval Chief of Staff, both approved the operation.⁷⁵

⁷² PRO: SOE Executive Committee – weekly progress reports, May – August 1941, in HS8/217. SOE Executive Committee – weekly progress reports, September – November 1941, in HS8/218. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', 6 Aug 1941-25 November 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3b, mappe 10/3/8b.

⁷³ PRO: paper entitled, 'Services Rendered by SOE to CCO: October 1941 to March 1942', attached to a note from C. H. Hambro to J. C. Haydon, ref. CH/1368, 27 March 1942 in HS8/818.

⁷⁴ PRO: naval cipher from the Admiralty to C-in-C Home Fleet, 22 February 1941 in PREM3/328/7. Reports, various – directives and heads of sections plans and projects, 5, 8 & 18 March 1941 in HS8/231.

⁷⁵ NHM: 'Interview with S (Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg), S1 (Frank Stagg), Captain Danielsen and Captain Ullstrup of the Norwegian Destroyer "Mansfield"', in SOE archive, boks 44, mappe 40/3/4. PRO: note by Hugh Dalton on 'Hemisphere' in HS8/ 367.

There were, therefore, during 1941 several examples of the RN and SOE working together and clear signs that the Admiralty was not averse to employing more unorthodox methods in operations against economic targets close to the Norwegian seaboard. This seems to suggest that from an early stage it understood the military contribution that SOE could make in this theatre. Nevertheless, during 1941 this co-operation achieved very little, and in the first half of 1942, as with the larger amphibious raids, small sea-borne operations along the Norwegian seaboard tailed off.⁷⁶ From November 1942, however, the RN was able to expand small-scale operations against enemy shipping in Norwegian coastal waters through the creation, under the command of ACOS, of the Royal Norwegian 30th Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB) Flotilla (RNorN MTB Flotilla). This consisted of eight 'Fairmile type D' MTBs with Norwegian crews, which were used in a series of anti-shipping operations, code-named "VP". The Special Service Brigade and Norwegian authorities also provided the troops for Combined Operations North Force (CONF), which carried out boarding actions, provided shore guards, and undertook small raids.⁷⁷

Furthermore, from March 1943, SOE's primary concern in northwest Europe was with 'current activities', a euphemism for sabotage, in order to increase the 'already severe strain on Germany'. And the priority for Norway was 'direct or indirect interference with coastal shipping', which meant that SOE increasingly concentrated its efforts in Norwegian waters.⁷⁸ By necessity these had to be based on close co-operation between SOE and ACOS, and consequently in the spring of 1943 Sir George Montagu Pollock RN, who had been specifically engaged by SOE's Norwegian section to take on responsibility for sea operations, was chosen to act as liaison officer between the two parties.⁷⁹ The result of this collaboration was two series of operations called 'Vestige' and 'Barbara' respectively, which were prepared under the command of ACOS, but received the full support of SOE. The 'general

⁷⁶ See chapter five, p. 155.

⁷⁷ In August 1943, RNorN MTB Flotilla became the 54th (N) MTB Flotilla and was expanded to twelve vessels. PRO: memo from ACOS to the Secretary for the Admiralty, ref. 2073/o.s.0271, 18 October 1942 in DEFE2/616. Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 188-190.

⁷⁸ PRO: COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68. 'Directive for Future Sabotage Policy in Norway', from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), to CD (Charles Hambro), ref. ADE/20, 31 May 1943 in HS2/233.

⁷⁹ NHM: Appendix Q, 'Norwegian Section: Liaison with Naval Authorities' in SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's file.

intention' was to 'supplement' strikes by surface craft through attacking enemy shipping 'anchored' in Norway's coastal waters.⁸⁰

Altogether, between September 1943 and April 1944, eight 'Vestige' operations were sent to Norway. They consisted of teams of Norwegian personnel from NIC (1), who had been trained to use a Norwegian designed kayak or the Folbot (a folding canoe) to get close to and then attach limpet mines to enemy shipping anchored within the inner leads. ACOS would assist either by making available MTBs to transport several SOE teams across the North Sea or by using these vessels to force enemy shipping into safe anchorage where it could be attacked. The operations, however, had little success. The terrible weather conditions that often occurred along Norway's west coast during the autumn months made the use of kayaks particularly hazardous and the delivery and pick-up of these SOE teams extremely problematic. It took five attempts to pick up the 'Vestige I' team, and some of the operations eventually stayed in the field for several months carrying out other activities. The 'Vestige IV' operation, which arrived in southern Norway in March 1944, remained in the country until the end of the war.⁸¹

Alongside 'Vestige' were the 'Barbara' operations, another plan to attack enemy shipping but this time using the Welman one-man midget submarine. SOE had begun to develop this vessel in the spring of 1942 in response to an Admiralty request for it to consider methods for attacking large capital ships: in particular the *Tirpitz*.⁸² It turned out, however, to be a drawn out and lengthy process but interest in the potential of the Welman continued with COHQ, the Admiral (Submarines), and SOE. At a meeting in early 1943 it was decided to place an initial order for 150 of these vessels, of which eighty would be required by SOE. It was agreed that the Admiral (Submarines) should be responsible for their sea training and handling, whilst SOE

⁸⁰ PRO: paper entitled, 'Attacks on Enemy Coastal Shipping', from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman to D/Plans, ref. ADE/2112, 6 July 1943 in HS8/284.

⁸¹ NHM: 'Coup de Main Operations – Shipping' in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8a. PRO: papers on Vestige I, II, & III, and memo from ACOS (Vice-Admiral Wells) to Lt. George Pollock, ref. 0272/4, 2 September 1943 in HS2/208. For details see Appendix E, 'Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

⁸² Professor Newitt and Lt. Colonel Dolphin of SOE's Technical Section developed the 'Welman' at the research station (Station IX), in Welwyn. It was originally conceived for Operation Frodesley a plan to attack the Tirpitz in spring 1942. The operation never took place but the first 'Welman' was tested in July 1942. It was a 20-foot submersible craft, electrically driven with a range of approximately 30 miles, able to carry one person, and with a warhead containing 560 lbs. of explosives. See: PRO: 'History of the Welman' in PREM3/191/1. 'History of the Welman Craft', by Professor D. M. Newitt (SOE), in DEFE2/958. P. Kemp, *Underwater Warriors: the Fighting History of Midget Submarines*, (London: Cassell & Co, 1996), pp. 158-164.

would appoint a liaison officer to assist.⁸³ By April 1943, however, ACOS had also began to take an interest in the Welman and wrote to the Admiralty requesting an allocation of twenty-five vessels, which it planned to use against enemy shipping in Norwegian waters.⁸⁴ In July, SOE made Lt. D. A. Howarth responsible for examining the possibilities of the Welman, and this eventually led him to work with ACOS on the planning and preparation of operations using these craft.⁸⁵ Moreover, seven Norwegians from NIC (1) were selected to undergo training in their use and a special base was established at Lunna Voe on the Shetlands.⁸⁶

The perceived potential of the Welman as another unorthodox means to attack enemy shipping, therefore, led to further collaboration between SOE and the RN and resulted in an attempt to undertake a series of operations in Norwegian waters in the autumn of 1943. Conditions in the North Sea, however, again proved insurmountable and of the four proposed Welman operations only the first, 'Barbara I' was attempted on the night of 20 November 1943 against the Laksevaag floating dock and shipping in Bergen harbour. Nevertheless, in order to assist further proposed attacks SOE provided forward parties at strategically important locations along the Norwegian coastline in readiness to collect intelligence on the movement of enemy shipping. But owing to a range of local difficulties the three remaining 'Barbara' operations were never carried out.⁸⁷

There were also plans to attack enemy shipping by employing Chariots, self-driven torpedoes for two, which would be carried on MTBs to be used at an opportune moment. In October 1943, Karl Vilnes was landed on Atløy, a small island off Norway's West Coast near Florø, to report shipping movements to a MTB that lay in wait with Chariots onboard, but no suitable targets arrived. Owing to the continually bad weather, it appears that no further such operations were ever attempted, and as with the Welmans, the idea was dropped and never resurrected.⁸⁸

⁸³ PRO: 'Minutes of a meeting on Welman craft held at Northways on 9 February 1943', in DEFE2/958.

⁸⁴ PRO: telegram from Lerwick, ref. local 916, 9 June 1943, in HS8/800.

⁸⁵ PRO: SOE Executive Committee - weekly progress reports, weeks commencing 19 July and 16 August in HS8/225.

⁸⁶ PRO: message from FOC, submarine sta., ref.031826B/AUG, 3 August 1943 in HS8/800.

⁸⁷ NHM: 'Operational Diary, August 1943 – June 1944' in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/21b. For details see Appendix E, 'Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945', pp. 328-333.

⁸⁸ In September 1943 four 'Chariots' arrived in the Shetlands and one or two MTBs were fitted with davits to carry these craft. The 'Chariot' was an electrically driven, torpedo shaped vessel with a range of 24 miles. The crew sat astride the vessel, which had a detachable warhead containing 600lbs of

Notwithstanding the failure of the ‘Vestige’ and ‘Barbara’ operations the use of midget submarines and submersible vessels was not, however, completely abandoned. Norwegian coastal waters continued to be strategically important to the Allies during 1944. In August, Sweden placed a ban on the use of its merchant fleet for trade with Germany and more importantly in September it closed its Baltic ports to Axis shipping. The Germans were therefore compelled to make greater use of Norwegian ports, especially Narvik in the north, and with the withdrawal of German troops into Norway from Finland in the autumn of 1944, the inner leads became an important route for moving or supplying these forces.⁸⁹ Furthermore, as the Allies advanced across France, German U-boats were moved from the Biscay ports to Norway to supplement units that were already there. With new technical developments and patterns of deployment, this was seen as a matter for ‘concern’ within the Admiralty.⁹⁰

Within this context and with support from within the Admiralty, SOE prepared the ‘Salamander’ operations, which targeted U-boat depot ships, U-boats, and enemy shipping in Norwegian harbours. Along with sabotage this was SOE’s contribution to the Allied offensive against the German U-boat presence in Norway that began in 1944.⁹¹ Altogether five operations to attach limpet mines to ships at anchor, using the ‘Sleeping Beauty’ motor submersible canoe developed by SOE during 1943, were proposed. Owing to SIS’s objections and local operational difficulties, however, only two were attempted, and these were unsuccessful.⁹² In addition SOE worked with the Royal Navy’s Flag Officer Submarines (FOS) on X-craft (midget submarine) operations against the German U-boat presence in Norway. It assisted in the preparation of Operations Guidance and Heckle, attacks carried out in April and September 1944 respectively against the Laaksevaag floating dock in Bergen that was used for U-boat repairs, by suggesting lurking places and escape routes for the crews. On this occasion the operations had some success. In April a coal ship, the *Barenfels*,

explosives that could be fixed to a ship by magnets. There is at least one case of a ‘Chariot’ coming loose in heavy seas and having to be cut loose and dropped over board. See: Kemp, *Underwater Warriors*, p. 122. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 215. Irvine, *The Waves are Free*, p. 142.

⁸⁹ Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 309.

⁹⁰ ADM223/172 & 315, cited in Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten*, vol. III, pp. 391-399. Barnet, *Engage the Enemy more Closely*, pp. 844, 852-853.

⁹¹ Lambert, ‘Seizing the Initiative’, p. 151.

⁹² PRO: paper entitled ‘Salamander Operations’, 6 September 1944 in ADM233/481. NHM: Operation Instructions for Salamander in FO IV archive, boks 122. Ulstein, *Etterretningstjenesten 1940-1945*, pp. 32-40. For details see Appendix E, ‘Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945’, pp. 328-333.

was sunk, and in September four sections of the dock were destroyed along with two merchant ships.⁹³

Unlike the actions of Coastal Command and the MTBs,⁹⁴ SOE operations against enemy shipping in Norwegian waters using an array of improvised or submersible vessels, were largely failures. This was primarily the result of the conditions found in the North Sea in the autumn and winter, which were too extreme for such small-scale activities. Out of the at least nineteen planned attacks against enemy shipping using the inner leads in 1943 and 1944, two were cancelled as a direct result of SIS objections and two operations achieved some success. The remaining fifteen were either hindered by bad weather, or were unable to identify a suitable target at a time when the operation had any chance of success. This compares unfavourably with the efforts of the 30th and 54th Norwegian MTB Flotillas, which between the end of 1942 and the spring of 1945 sank at least twenty-one merchant vessels, one destroyer, and twelve or thirteen patrol vessels.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, these operations show how important collaboration with the RN was for SOE in carrying out its objective of attacking economic and military targets close to the Norwegian seaboard. They should also not be seen in isolation but as a small part of the wider offensive that was carried out against enemy shipping in Norwegian waters, and which helped to divert enemy manpower and resources to this peripheral theatre particularly in 1943 and 1944 in the run up to Overlord.⁹⁶

This offensive against enemy shipping in Norwegian coastal waters was given added urgency by the arrival of the *Tirpitz* off Trondheim in January 1942. The *Tirpitz* was sent to Norway to protect the German position and to tie down British

⁹³ The 'X-craft' was a fully equipped miniature submarine with a range of 150 miles. The craft had a crew of three and could carry six Commandos on a short passage. It also carried two 2-ton charges that could be laid on the seabed beneath the target. NHM: Appendix Q, 'Norwegian Section Liaison with Naval Authorities' in SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's file. PRO: note from the Director of Operational Research, Admiralty, to Admiral (Submarines), 11 February 1947 and from Flag Officer Submarines, Fort Blockhouse, Gosport, to Director of Operational research, ref. SM.4031/297, 25 April 1947 in ADM 199/1890. Kemp, *Underwater Warriors*, pp. 168, 175.

⁹⁴ Christine Goulter, in her history of Coastal Command argues that its anti-shipping campaign in northwest Europe was clearly successful in terms of tonnage sunk. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, pp. 316-317. Irvine, *The Waves are Free*, p. 131.

⁹⁵ *Den norske regjeringens virksomhet: fra 9 april til 22 juni 1945*, vol. IV, forsvarsdepartementet, p. 31.

⁹⁶ Christine Goulter also argues that the Coastal Command offensive made a major contribution through diverting German manpower and war materials to defend shipping. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, pp. 316-317.

naval forces in the Atlantic away from other theatres,⁹⁷ and the many operations launched against this battleship indicate that at the time it was considered a serious threat to British interests. Furthermore, its presence in Norwegian waters became an additional encouragement for the RN, especially after air attack had failed, to work with SOE and make use of its unorthodox methods to help sink or at least severely disable this powerful vessel.

It was not only SIS that supplied intelligence on the position and movements of the *Tirpitz*.⁹⁸ SOE organisation, 'Antrum', which had been established in the Ålesund district from December 1941, transmitted telegrams in February and March 1942 that contained details on the location of the battleship.⁹⁹ From February 1942, the first steps were also taken to establish the 'Lark' team in the Trondheim area. The objective of this SOE operation was to organise, train and arm local guerrilla groups in readiness to assist a still anticipated landing in Norway, but its location made it an important asset for gathering intelligence on and assisting operations against the *Tirpitz*.¹⁰⁰

In March 1942, the Admiralty requested that SOE consider ways of placing explosives close to the *Tirpitz* using a one-man submarine and it was the resultant project called 'Frodesley' that ultimately led to the development of the Welman. It was originally proffered that SOE recruits would be used to carry out the attack, but SOE saw it as a job for naval personnel and its role was therefore confined to supplying intelligence and possibly transportation.¹⁰¹ At the time, however, it appears that there was considerable urgency within the Admiralty to undertake some form of operation against the German battleship, and as the development of the Welman was a

⁹⁷ In November 1941, Hitler decided to move the *Tirpitz* to Norway. Report of the C-in-C Navy to the Fuehrer, 13 November 1941, and 29 December 1941, cited in *Fuehrer Conferences on Naval affairs*, pp. 237 & 248.

⁹⁸ It was SIS station 'Theta' that reported the arrival of the *Tirpitz* in Trondheim. From this point a major effort was put underway by SIS to establish a number of its agents in the vicinity of Trondheim to watch over the German battleship. During 1942, five SIS clandestine radio stations were established in this area and made contact with the Home Station: 'Lerken I', 'Lerken II', 'Leporis', 'Scorpion', and 'Virgo'. See: Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*, p. 75 & 81.

⁹⁹ PRO: telegrams nos. 985 and 956, dated 21 February and 7 March 1942 in HS2/141.

¹⁰⁰ Rolf Dahlø, in his recent biographical account of the search for his real father, the 'Lark' radio operator Evald Hansen, claims that until the end of May 1942 the 'Lark' W/T set was probably used by a SIS operative to send intelligence and that SOE HQ was not made aware of this. I can find nothing in the SOE archives to support this theory. NHM: 'Lark Notes' in SOE archive, boks 33, mappe 22/1/12, and boks 38, mappe 22/5/1. See also: PRO: files HS2/159 & 160. Dahlø, *Skjebnetrårder*, p. 165.

¹⁰¹ For details see: PRO: HS2/179, Operation Frodesley.

long-term project 'Frodesley' was dropped.¹⁰² Within this context in May 1942, SOE began to examine ways of carrying out sabotage against the *Tirpitz*, and these included attacking the submarine nets or smuggling explosives and incendiaries onboard the ship through using the 'Lark' organisation.¹⁰³ It also continued to provide intelligence on the battleship's position and defences.¹⁰⁴

In June 1942, however, SOE was approached by the Admiral (Submarines) and asked if it would co-operate in a plan to attack the *Tirpitz* in Åsenfjord, a branch of Trondheimsfjord. This was Operation Title, a proposal to use Chariots to place explosives under the battleship. By June 1942, this new craft was ready for its initial trials and therefore, despite an awareness that the German battleship was temporarily in northern Norway, preparations for 'Title' were pressed on with. The 'Lark' organisation was initially asked to persuade a local man to lend his fishing boat so that the Chariots could be towed through the local security controls. But when this failed it obtaining the paperwork that enabled SOE to produce the false documents that would allow a boat from the Shetlands to gain close proximity to the German battleship. Preparations were also made by the 'Lark' organisation to assist the escape of the fishing vessel and Chariot crews to Sweden after the operation had been completed.¹⁰⁵ On 26 October 1942, two days after the *Tirpitz* had arrived back in Trondheim to be overhauled, the Norwegian fishing vessel, *Arthur*, crewed by four Norwegians from the Shetlands Base and with two Chariots and six naval personnel onboard, left the Shetlands.¹⁰⁶ The operation was, however, never completed as the Chariots were lost whilst being towed in heavy seas.

¹⁰² Although the first craft was complete by end of June 1942, it was September before preliminary trials began. PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to SN/A (Malcolm Munthe), ref. SN/486, 7 May 1942, in HS2/202. 'History of the Welman', in PREM 3/191/1. Kemp, *Underwater Warriors*, p. 158.

¹⁰³ PRO: memo to SN/A (Malcolm Munthe) from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) ref. SN/486, 7 May 1942 in HS2/202.

¹⁰⁴ In April/May 1942, the SOE agent, Johnny Pevik returned to Britain bringing with him important local intelligence. For details see: PRO: HS2/202, Operation Title.

¹⁰⁵ The 'Lark' organisation approached a local man, Johan Utseto, who owned a fishing boat called the *Monitor*. He rejected their approach and therefore a boat from the Shetlands had to be used. A courier was sent to Trondheim from the British legation in Stockholm to collect certain papers, including a certificate for the *Arthur*, which had been organised by the 'Lark' organisation. At the beginning of October 1942 Odd Sørli flew to Scotland with these papers. He was also able provide information on the area around Trondheim before the operation sailed. See: PRO: 'Orders for Operation Title', issued by the office of Admiral (Submarines), 22 September 1942. Letter from SOE to captain, the Lord Ashbourne RN, 1 October 1942. Paper entitled 'Title', by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. SN/2048, 16 November 1942, all in HS2/202.

¹⁰⁶ PRO: paper entitled 'Title' by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. SN/2048, 16 November 1942, in HS2/202.

The resolve to sink or disable the *Tirpitz*, however, remained, and led to further collaboration. As early as October 1942, SOE was asked to provide a Norwegian fishing vessel for towing trials of a new and fully equipped miniature submarine, the X-craft.¹⁰⁷ These would eventually be used in Operation Source, a successful attempt against the *Tirpitz* in September 1943. The initial plan was to tow them to an island off Trondheim from where they would proceed independently to attack the German battleship. As with 'Title' the 'Lark' organisation would help the submarine crews to escape to Sweden if they were forced to swim ashore.¹⁰⁸ By February 1943, however, it had become clear that the craft would not be ready for an attack that spring and the operation was postponed to the following season. In March 1943, the *Tirpitz* joined the *Scharnhorst* in Narvik and then Altafjord in northern Norway. As SOE had no presence in this area its involvement in Operation Source ended.¹⁰⁹

A significant number of sea-borne operations were carried out by SOE in Norwegian waters between 1940 and 1944. They were a result of both the strategic importance placed on attacks against enemy shipping in this theatre and the level of collaboration that developed between SOE, the RN, and ultimately the Norwegian military authorities. They were therefore a manifestation of the mix of influences that shaped SOE's activities in Norway. Although these sea-borne operations were largely unsuccessful, it was never a result of Royal Naval intransigence or opposition. It was not even because of SIS obduracy or the priority accorded to it in this theatre. It was primarily owing to a factor outside everyone's control, the extreme conditions found in the North Sea during the autumn and winter months, which made any type of sea-borne operation, especially one using a small fishing boat, kayak, or midget submarine, so precarious.

¹⁰⁷ PRO: letter from Commander D. C. Ingram RN to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, ref. SMO4351/S, 19 October 1942, in HS2/206.

¹⁰⁸ For details see: PRO: HS2/206, Operation Source.

¹⁰⁹ On 11 September 1943 six submarines left British waters towing the six 'X-craft' that would attack the *Tirpitz* and *Scharnhorst* in Altafjord in northern Norway. Two craft were lost on the way, but eventually on 22 September two vessels managed to place charges below the *Tirpitz*, and considerable damage was done to the battleship. Repairs took five months. The *Scharnhorst*, however, escaped undamaged. See: Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 75-76.

III

SOE and the British and American Air Forces in Norway: Bombing, Sabotage, or a combination?

SOE not only collaborated on sea-borne operations but also with attacks from the air, although in comparison to the scale of the strategic air campaign against Germany, Norway received very little attention. Nevertheless, both the Royal Air Force (RAF) and the United States of America Army Air Force (USAAF) eventually carried out a small number of actions against selective targets in this theatre.¹¹⁰ In addition there was also the string of operations undertaken by the RAF and Fleet Air Arm against the *Tirpitz*, the dropping of thousands of mines in Norwegian coastal waters and the Skagerrak, and Coastal Command's campaign against enemy shipping.¹¹¹

Previous histories of SOE have tended to focus on its struggle with Bomber Command over the availability of aircraft.¹¹² There was, however, another aspect to the relationship between these two parties that in the case of Norway was far more constructive. From the autumn of 1940, one of SOE's objectives in this theatre was to make sure that it was in a position to render 'active assistance' to attacks from the air on the few occasions that they were undertaken.¹¹³ When in the summer of 1941 strategic bombing was upgraded to the 'main campaign aimed at the "wearing down" of German power' and it was decided that sabotage should be directed 'in accordance with the bombing policy aim', this link between SOE activities and air operations was confirmed.¹¹⁴ Consequently, from an early stage and throughout the occupation of Norway, SOE and the British and American Air Forces often co-operated in their efforts to attack important economic and military targets in Norway.

The use of this powerful and devastating strategic instrument, however, also had potentially major implications for the civilian population, which often suffered as

¹¹⁰ The official histories of the RAF and USAAF respectively only refer to a total of four bombing operations in Norway: an attack on Stavanger aerodrome on 11 April 1940, an attack on the Knaben molybdenum factory in March 1943, an attack against *Nordisk Lettmetal* at Herøya in July 1943, and the air attack against Rjukan and Knaben in November 1943. C. Webster & N. Frankland, *The Strategic Air offensive against Germany 1939-1945*, (London: HMSO, 1961), vol. I, p. 141, note 2, & vol. II, part four, pp. 66, 292. W. F. Craven, J. L. Cate (eds.), *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, (Washington D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983), vol. II, pp. 674-676, 851.

¹¹¹ Throughout her history of Coastal Command's anti-shipping campaign, Christine Goulter provides a detailed account of its operations along the Norwegian coastline. See: Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*.

¹¹² Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, pp. 61-62, 111-112, 116-117. Foot, *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, pp. 31-32.

¹¹³ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, in HS2/128.

¹¹⁴ PRO: JP (41) 649, 'Special Operations Executive', report by the Joint Planning Staff, 9 August 1941, in CAB79/13. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book one, p. 142.

a direct result of the RAF's recurring inability to hit the intended target.¹¹⁵ Therefore it became an important political issue. The Norwegian government could not ignore collateral damage and a large number of civilian deaths, and consequently attempted to ensure through co-operation with its allies that strategic bombing was used sparingly in Norway and only against what were considered targets of legitimate military value. Here it had some but not complete success. Rather paradoxically, however, the Norwegian authorities through SOE were not adverse to calling on the RAF to assist in attacking targets in Norway if it was believed an operation could have an important internal political value, such as bolstering morale or encouraging resistance.

Because of its political ramifications, the role of strategic bombing in Norway has attracted significant interest amongst Norwegian historians.¹¹⁶ Along with *coup de main* and sabotage operations, air attacks in Norway were from the beginning another strand of Britain's attritional policy and therefore as they both shared the same objective there was a good reason for SOE and the RAF to attempt to co-ordinate their activities. With, however, the bulk of Bomber Command's resources focused on Germany, along with the small number of strategic targets and the large distances involved, sabotage and *coup de main* operations were usually more suited to attacks against economic and military targets in Norway. Consequently, unlike on the Continent they constituted the predominant means used to attack German power in this theatre. Nevertheless, certain important sites could only be assaulted from the air and therefore when required SOE would not hesitate to turn to and collaborate with the RAF or USAAF, and if ultimately necessary ignore the concerns of the Norwegian authorities. Decisions over whether to bomb or sabotage a target were therefore based on what was practical at the time, not a pre-determined policy. The aim was ultimately the same: to deny Germany supplies of key war materials.

¹¹⁵ In August 1941, the Butt Report after examining hundreds of photographs and flight reports concluded that of all aircraft recorded as having hit their targets, only one-third got within five miles of them. See: Webster and Frankland, vol. IV, pp. 205-13, cited in Denis Richards, *RAF Bomber Command in the Second World War: The Hardest Victory*, (London: Penguin Classic, 2001), p. 96.

¹¹⁶ Sverre Kjelstadli argues that the Norwegian view was that sabotage was the preferred alternative for operations against important war targets in Norway because it was the best way of preserving property and lives. He goes on to claim that for the Allies, after the Casablanca Conference in 1943, bombing became a necessity, but with regard to Norway the Norwegian view eventually prevailed. Riste disputes this. He argues that each target was judged on its merits and that sabotage or bombing was chosen on the basis of which was more suitable. Both the British and Norwegians were prepared to accept either means and therefore neither bombing nor sabotage was the choice of one nation. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 210-211. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 61-62.

SOE and RAF collaboration in Norway began as early as the autumn of 1940. Representatives of SOE, including Charles Hambro, attended a meeting at the Air Ministry in November, which led to Operations Youth and Beauty, three attacks by Coastal Command's No 18 Group against the railway line and a hotel at Finse, which accommodated German troops, northeast of Bergen.¹¹⁷ SOE had already identified the Oslo-Bergen railway as a potential target and provided the Air Ministry with maps and cinefilms of the targets. According to Coastal Command the aim of the operations was to encourage local resistance,¹¹⁸ and as SOE had already built up contacts with groups in this area, there is good reason to believe this is correct.¹¹⁹ Regular meetings between SOE and Coastal Command were suggested and further targets considered, but at a time of restricted resources nothing appears to have come of this. This was, however, a very early and typical example of how SOE was prepared to work alongside the RAF on operations in Norway.

As shown, during 1941, raids were the predominate form of operation against economic and military targets in the Norwegian theatre.¹²⁰ There were a small number of attacks carried out by the Fleet Air Arm and Coastal Command against economic targets along or close to the Norwegian coastline during the autumn and winter of 1941-1942.¹²¹ But at a time when Bomber Command lacked the resources

¹¹⁷ The three attacks were carried out on the nights of 17/18 December, 19/20 December, and 21/22 December 1940 and targeted the snow-sheds along 25 miles of railway between Nyrdal and Haugastøl and the hotel at Finse. It was claimed that both the railway and snow-sheds were hit, as was the hotel, but with little apparent damage. See: PRO: AIR15/491, Operations against Naval and Industrial Targets – Norway and Denmark.

¹¹⁸ The original meeting that led to these operations was held on 29 November. Finn Nagell claims that there was more than one meeting and Hambro certainly suggested weekly meetings with Coastal Command. PRO: Report from Air Chief Marshal, Commander-in-Chief, Coastal Command, on operations against military industrial targets, Norway; ref. CC/S/7010/35/plans, 4 January 1941, and letter from Charles Hambro to Group-Captain Lloyd, 27 December 1940, in AIR15/491. KKA, Nagell's arkiv, mappe 77, and conversations with Nagell in 1970, cited in Riste, *London Regjeringa*, vol. I., p. 108.

¹¹⁹ SOE papers from the autumn of 1940 refer to possible attacks against the Oslo-Bergen railway and the snow sheds as part of cutting communications within the country in support of an eventual rebellion. This policy was dropped in December 1940, but there was a belief at the time that there was a large resistance movement in the area and this operation was probably designed to encourage and support its development. Olav Riste, however, argues that the attacks were a defensive measure aimed at hampering any proposed invasion of Britain from Norway. I have found no evidence to support this hypothesis and SOE's 'Claribel' schemes, which were designed exactly for this purpose, were not put together until after these operations were carried out. PRO: papers entitled 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940 and 'Norwegian Project', 3 November 1940', in HS2/128. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 108.

¹²⁰ See chapter five p. 149-150.

¹²¹ In September 1941, planes from HMS Victorious, part of 'Force M' that had sailed with the first convoy to the Soviet Union, attacked the quay to the A/S Frostfjell near Bodø, whilst planes from 823 squadron attacked the power station at Glomfjord and the aluminium works in Haugvik. In December 1941 and January 1942 planes from Coastal Command attacked herring oil factories along the

to undertake anything close to a sustained and widespread air campaign against Germany, Norway was largely ignored.¹²² Nevertheless, SOE began to prepare its own operations against major sites, and whilst putting these together it became clear that certain targets, because of size or location, were more suited to attacks from the air. Consequently, toward the end of 1941 and in early 1942, SOE again turned to the RAF to carry out operations that it felt unable to undertake.

From the spring of 1941, SOE's Norwegian section began to prepare Operation Clairvoyant, the proposed action against crucial hydroelectric power plants across southern Norway, including the one at Vemork, which was deemed more suitable for an air attack than sabotage. The plan was that support would be provided by SOE on the ground through a party of three under Jens Poulsson, the future leader of the 'Grouse' operation, which would light flares to lead the aircraft to the target.¹²³ This early proposal to attack Vemork is significant, however, not only because it shows that SOE was in certain cases prepared to recommend and assist an air attack, but because it is an example of a key military target in Norway around which crystallised the dilemma over what were the most suitable military means to use, both at a local operational level and politically.

Bombing was initially abandoned because of the objections of the Norwegian military authorities,¹²⁴ but the idea of using an air attack against Vemork never completely went away. During preparations for Operation Freshman, COHQ saw a daylight raid by the American Air Force as the 'best alternative' should their plans prove impracticable. SOE apparently raised no objections to this, although they felt 'in the best interests of future co-operation', General Hansteen should be informed

Norwegian coast. See: Hafsten (*et al*), *Flyalarm: Luftkrigen over Norge 1939-1945*, p. 126. *Den norske regjerings virksomhet fra 9 april 1940 til 22 juni 1945*, vol. IV, forsvarsdepartementet, p. 125. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 47.

¹²² Bomber Command undertook several operations against Norwegian airfields during the campaign in Norway, but by spring 1941 the focus had moved to dropping mines. At this time Britain also took delivery of twenty B-17s, some of which undertook two raids against Norway in September 1941. Bomber Command began the war with just thirty-three squadrons, half of which were only light bombers, and even the heavy bombers lacked the range-payload combination to be really effective over Germany. In the second half of 1940 although numbers had increased to thirty-eight squadrons, no more than twenty bombers were usually available for a single night's operations. Up until June 1941, Germany was still dropping a heavier payload on Britain than it received. See: Willmott, *The Great Crusade*, pp. 277-284. Farrell, *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy*, book I, p. 186. Hafsten (*et al*), *Flyalarm: luftkrigen over Norge 1939-1945*, pp. 79-82, 109-117, 129.

¹²³ Poulssen, *Aksjon Vemork*, p. 38. See chapter five, p. 159.

¹²⁴ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', nos. 61 & 62, 27 & 10 February 1942, in SOE archive, boks3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

beforehand.¹²⁵ The Americans also approached the Norwegian authorities at this time suggesting a daylight-bombing raid by USAAF, but were turned down.¹²⁶ After the failure of 'Freshman' the idea of bombing was resurrected through Operation Gerd, a plan to attack either the intake dam for the water for the Vemork and S  heim power stations or the ventilator plant that regulated the supply of water. Norwegian concerns over civilian casualties, however, meant an air attack was again at least temporarily sidelined.¹²⁷

By the summer of 1943, however, intelligence provided by the 'Swallow' team made it clear that 'Gunnarside', the SOE's sabotage operation against the Vemork plant the previous February, had not achieved the interruption in heavy water production that was expected.¹²⁸ Therefore, FO began to reconsider ways of halting supplies, including an attack on the intake dam or by stopping its transportation to Germany. Leif Tronstad was, however, convinced that the bombing of the heavy water plant, which was structurally well protected, would fail.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, SOE believed that every option should be considered, including an air attack.¹³⁰ Moreover, there was still a great deal of uncertainty amongst the British and American authorities as to Germany's progress toward the development of an atomic bomb. Although through SIS and Norwegian authorities information and intelligence was obtained from several scientific sources including Leif Tronstad and Jomar Brun, Brunnulf Ottar and Professor Harald Wergeland in Norway, Nj  l Hole in Sweden, Paul Rosbaud in Germany, and Professor Nils Bohr in Denmark, it was 'extremely difficult to form a definite opinion as to the urgency and purpose' of Germany's atomic research.¹³¹ Therefore, the opinion within DSIR was that production at

¹²⁵ PRO: internal COHQ note from A.P.1 to C.A.P., 31 October 1942 and letter from Brigadier C. McV. Gubbins (SOE) to Major General J. C. Haydon (COHQ), ref. CMcVG/471, 30 October 1942, in DEFE2/219.

¹²⁶ PRO: 'Report with reference to Attacks at Rjukan and Vemork', (translation) from Leif Tronstad to General Hansteen, 30 November 1943, in HS8/955. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 50 & 53.

¹²⁷ Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, p. 70.

¹²⁸ PRO: telegram from 'Swallow', ref. srl nr. A751, 8 July, in HS2/187.

¹²⁹ Leif Tronstad argued that bombing would not penetrate the several floors of concrete that lay above the heavy water plant, which was in the basement of a seven-storey building. PRO: 'Report with Reference to Attacks at Rjukan and Vemork', (translation) from Leif Tronstad to General Hansteen, 30 November 1943, in HS8/955. Memo from Captain L. Tronstad to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, 5 August 1943, in HS2/187. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 206.

¹³⁰ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to A/CD (Air Commodore A.R. Boyle), ref. SN/1496, 10 August 1943, in HS2/187.

¹³¹ PRO: paper entitled, 'TA Project: Enemy Intelligence', from M.W. Perrin and Major R.R. Furman to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Major General Groves, 28 November 1944, in CAB126/244. F. H. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, vol. II, p. 128. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*,

Vemork should be stopped, and that ‘only a daylight bombing attack would be really successful’.¹³² On 5 October 1943, Sir John Anderson, who had ministerial responsibility for Britain’s atomic bomb project, asked SOE to produce an appreciation on the matter. Based on a report produced by J. C. Adamson, SOE recommended that sabotage had little chance of success and that a daylight-bombing raid was the only effective way to end the production of heavy water in Norway.¹³³ Furthermore, by this time the American authorities also placed ‘great importance on the thorough destruction of the plant’.¹³⁴ There was therefore a growing consensus, despite Norwegian objections, that Vemork should and could only be attacked from the air.

Later in October, Sir Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff, contacted General Eaker commanding the American 8th Air Force in Britain, who thought that ‘his forces would be able to attack the objective’ [Vemork], as a ‘convenient alternative to targets in Germany when attacks on the latter were prevented by weather’.¹³⁵ Consequently, on 16 November 1943, as part of Operation 131, 160 B-17 and B-24 American aircraft from bases in Britain attacked the electrolytic hydrogen works at Vemork, where heavy water was produced, and twelve aircraft attacked the Norsk Hydro nitrate plant at Rjukan, a few miles down the same valley.¹³⁶ Although the operation did not substantially damage the heavy water plant and only fifty kilograms of the liquid were destroyed, the bombing led to a decision by the authorities to

pp.65, 74. Dahl, *Heavy Water and the Wartime Race for Nuclear Energy*, p. 248. A. Kramish, *The Griffin*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986). Jones, *Most Secret War*, pp. 472-473.

¹³² PRO: paper entitled, ‘Norway – Production of Heavy Water’, by Michael Penn (this is probably M. W. Perrin), 20 August 1943, in HS8/ 955.

¹³³ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to A/CD (Air Comdr. A. R. Boyle), ref. SN/1496, 10 August 1943. Memo from V/CD (Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. VCD/527, 5 October 1943. Note from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to V/CD (Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg), 15 October 1943, and letter from H. N. Sporborg to W.L. Gorell-Barnes, ref. HNS/563, 16 October 1943, all in HS2/187.

¹³⁴ PRO: letter from L. C. Hollis (secretary to the COS Committee) to CAS (Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal), 18 October 1943, in AIR8/1767.

¹³⁵ PRO: note from the Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Charles Portal, to Brigadier Hollis, 20 October 1943 in AIR8/1767.

¹³⁶ On 16 November the American 8th Air Force undertook Operation 131, which included three missions in Norway. The first was against the Oslo-Kjeller aerodrome, with the Electrolytic Hydrogen plant at Vemork as a secondary target, and the nitrate plant at Rjukan as a target of ‘opportunity’. The second mission was against Knaben, with the nitrate plant at Rjukan as a target of ‘last resort’. The third mission had the Electrolytic Hydrogen works at Vemork as the primary target, with the nitrate works at Rjukan as a target of ‘opportunity’. For Mission no 3, 169 B-17s took off but only 143 attacked the primary target and 4 the target of opportunity. For Mission no 1, 17 B-24s attacked the secondary target and 12 the target of opportunity. This means that altogether 160 planes attacked the Electrolytic Hydrogen works in Vemork, whilst 16 attacked the nitrate works in Rjukan. PRO: Operation 131, Provisional Main Reports, 18 November, in AIR40/481.

dismantle the site and transport the equipment and its contents to Germany.¹³⁷ These attacks, which resulted in twenty-one civilian deaths, produced a sharp response from the Norwegian government, which had not been informed beforehand. There was anger and frustration that they had not been consulted on the decision to bomb the plant, especially as since the summer of 1942 the Norwegian authorities had worked closely with the Air Ministry in producing a ‘target list’ for Norway. On the list Vemork was marked as a site better suited for attack by other means. Nevertheless, as with other air operations in Norway, such as the one against the *Nordisk Lettmetall* (light metal) and *Eidanger Salpeter* (Saltpetre) plants on Herøya in southern Norway in July 1943, the Norwegian authorities often had little influence over the final choice of target, which was often decided by other factors such as economic and military priorities, opportunity, availability of resources, and even weather conditions.¹³⁸

SOE’s contribution to the decision over whether or not to bomb the heavy water plant and its eventual support for an air attack is significant for a number of reasons. It is a further illustration of how operations against key military targets in Norway were ultimately the result of a combination of factors. The nature of the target: the production of heavy water was considered so important that a series of methods to halt production, including air attack, were considered and ultimately used. The political concerns of the Norwegian authorities did, however, have an impact and meant that an air operation was a last choice, although when sabotage failed to achieve the expected results, these concerns were put to one side and SOE, as it had from the beginning was fully prepared to support the use of air power. This means that the previous assertions that SOE did not participate in the decision to bomb Vemork are incorrect: it was directly involved.¹³⁹ This operation also illustrates that when a target was identified as being of major significance to the German war effort, the various military agencies, whether unorthodox and new such as SOE, or part of the ‘professional’ military services such as the RAF, were fully prepared and capable of working together. There was no pre-determined policy as to what were the best or

¹³⁷ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 221. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork 1940-1945*, p. 78.

¹³⁸ The Norwegians sent a protest note to the British and Americans on 1 December. L Collier replied on 4 January after instructions from Anthony Eden. PRO: letter from L. Collier, British Ambassador to Norway to Trygve Lie, Norwegian Foreign Minister, 4 January 1944, and note to Anthony Eden, British Foreign Minister from L. Collier, ref. N235/24/G, 7 January 1944 in HS2/234. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp 54-56.

¹³⁹ Kjelstadli claims that SOE was not advised of the operation until it was over. Riste claims that SOE shared the Norwegian view that the heavy water site was more suited to sabotage than bombing. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 205-207. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 58.

most expedient measures to use in Norway; the only policy was a shared commitment to take every opportunity and use whatever means available to undermine German power.

Vemork was not the only economic target in Norway that SOE viewed as more suitable for air attack than a *coup de main* or sabotage operation. The Knaben molybdenum mine near Fjotland in southern Norway was considered by the MEW as the 'most outstanding objective in Norway from the economic point of view'.¹⁴⁰ Molybdenum was used in the production and hardening of specialist steel for German armaments production and once war broke out Germany obtained eighty percent of its supplies from this mine. Consequently, by the early autumn of 1941, SOE had begun to consider an operation against this site.¹⁴¹ It was, however, eventually decided that it was a target more suitable for an air attack, probably because of its position sixty miles from the coast in remote and difficult countryside. Therefore, in March 1942, negotiations commenced with the Air Ministry to 'secure the bombing of the Knaben mines', and arrangements were made with Operation Cheese II, Odd Starheim and Andreas Fasting, who had been dropped into southern Norway in January, to lay out guiding lights. By mid April, Bomber Command had accepted the target but a few weeks later it advised SOE that there were not the 'machines' available and consequently it was unable to undertake the operation.¹⁴²

SOE's project to put the Knaben mines out of action, which was given the code name 'Alfriston', was, nevertheless, not abandoned and therefore during 1942 there were negotiations involving SOE, COHQ and OSS as to what were the most suitable means to attack the plant. SOE targeted the local power supplies, but believed a really effective operation would require a parachute attack against the mine installations, which fell under the remit of COHQ. The position of the mine, however, made a successful withdrawal impossible and it was therefore offered as a

¹⁴⁰ PRO: Paper headed, 'List of Selected Targets', no 2, Knaben Molybdenum Mines, 5 September 1942, in HS8/131.

¹⁴¹ Up to the occupation of Northwest Africa, Germany obtained 80% of its molybdenum supplies from Knaben. Small amounts came from French Morocco, Northern Norway and Finland. PRO: Memo from AD/S (Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg) to M (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), 28 November 1942, in HS8/237. Paper entitled 'Knaben Molybdenum Mine: Appreciation of Importance to Germany', in AIR20/8179. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 310. F.D. 5359/45, RK., Abt., 'Delivery Programme for the Norwegian Economy, 1 September 1942 to 31 August 1943', cited in Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway* pp. 264, 61 & 264.

¹⁴² PRO: 'Reports to the COS, March 1942 – December 1942', month ending 14 May 1942 in HS8/244. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 31 March, in SOE archive,

‘suicide’ operation to OSS. All these proposals were, however, ultimately rejected because the ‘tactical difficulties were too great’, and therefore it eventually came back to using air power.¹⁴³

By early 1943, after the small supply of molybdenum that Germany had obtained from French Morocco was cut off, Knaben became almost the sole source of this material and as a result by mid February 1943, Bomber Command had it ‘under review’.¹⁴⁴ Eventually, with assistance from FO, which provided important local intelligence, and SOE, which attempted to retain agents in the area of the mine, it agreed to undertake an air attack against the plant. On 3 March 1943, therefore, ten Mosquito aircraft from No. 2 Group Bomber Command attacked Knaben, with the result that full production could not recommence until August. This was followed by further attacks in November 1943, when 132 B-17s of the American 8th Air Force dropped 282 tons of high explosive on the site, and again in December 1943.¹⁴⁵

Knaben is an additional but important example of how the strategic importance of a site was essential in determining the level of military interest and ultimately collaboration. SOE accepted that it did not have the means to undertake an operation against such a difficult target and therefore it was fully prepared to work with COHQ, OSS, and ultimately the RAF in order to halt the production of this important war material. It was quick to recognise that the best method was probably an air attack and in line with its stated policy set out to provide ‘active assistance’. On this occasion SOE also had the support of the Norwegian authorities, and therefore collaboration between all parties was a central factor in determining both the nature and eventually the success of this operation.

Co-operation between SOE and the RAF was not, however, confined to attacks against military or economic sites. The Norwegian resistance, both civilian (Sivorg) and military (Milorg) through their government in London, and for political

boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. ANCC Meetings, 1-20, no five, 24 April 1942, in FOIV archive, boks 32, mappe 5-B-A.

¹⁴³ NHM: ‘Consolidated Progress reports of S Section’, weeks ending 21 July, 21 August, and 27 September 1942. PRO: Paper entitled ‘Projected Operations’, 12 August 1942, in HS2/226. Meeting of ‘search committee’ at COHQ, 24 October 1942, ref. SR. 606/42, in DEFE2/4.

¹⁴⁴ PRO: ‘Reports on Operational Plans for Meetings of ANCC’, 12 February 1943, in HS2/236.

¹⁴⁵ Both Lt. J. H. Reimers from the Norwegian High Command, and Lt. Tycho Moe, from the Norwegian Air Force, contributed to the preparations for an air operation. Moe knew the area around Knaben and provided intelligence on the topography and local weather. Seventeen Norwegian civilians were killed in the first air attack. NHM: ‘Mosquito Attack on Knaben, 3 March 1943’, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/9. PRO: Paper entitled, ‘Knaben Molybdenum Mine’, in AIR20/8179. ‘Operation 131’ in AIR/481. Webster & Frankland, *The Strategic Air offensive against*

reasons twice called on SOE to obtain the assistance of the RAF in attacks against targets in Norway. In the summer of 1942, Sivorg requested the bombing of the headquarters of the German security police in Oslo, which included the offices of the Gestapo, and the RAF after the intervention of SOE attacked the site in September. In December 1944, RAF undertook a further attack against the same target after a request from the leadership of Milorg was received through SOE. Both operations achieved little, apart from the death of many civilians and the destruction of surrounding buildings, but these political gestures were considered legitimate by the Norwegian authorities and they were fully prepared to use their close relationship with SOE to gain the assistance of the RAF.¹⁴⁶

As the final stages of the war in Europe arrived, especially after the assault phase of Overlord was complete, air attacks against military targets in Norway, such as the U-boat bases in Bergen and Trondheim, oil and petrol stores, and enemy shipping, increased and were part of the final campaign against Germany.¹⁴⁷ Calls for air support for SOE operations also continued, especially as part of the effort to slow down the movement of German forces southward through Norway in the winter of 1944-1945, although on this occasion without success. The request was given full consideration but it was believed that in this case the bombing effort was better targeted against shipping.¹⁴⁸

SOE recognised that in order to achieve its strategic objectives in Norway it would on occasion be required to assist and work with the RAF on operations in Norway. The number of examples of collaboration is small, however, which was not

Germany, vol. II, part 4, p. 292. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, note 38, p. 415.

¹⁴⁶ The first attack by four British Mosquitoes was carried out on 25 September 1942. Most of the bombs missed their target, resulting in six civilian deaths. The request for the air raid originated with the civilian resistance leadership in Norway and was in response to a gathering of Quisling's *Nasjonal Samling* party in Oslo at the same time. General Hansteen took the request to Lord Selborne on 3 September 1942. Twelve Mosquitoes carried out the second raid on 31 December 1944. Houses around the target were hit along with a nearby tram, resulting in 77 Norwegian deaths. The request for this operation appears to have originated with SL, and was supported by J. Chr. Hauge when he visited London in November 1944. See: PRO: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/3611, 13 December 1944, in HS2/235. FA, hylle 20, mappe 'Samarbeidet med SOE: Generelt', cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 208. C. Gunnfeldt, *Bomb Gestapo Hovedkvarteret*, (Oslo: Wings Forlag A/S, 1995).

¹⁴⁷ NHM: FO IV archive, boks 9, mappe 9-B-1, 'Bombing'. B. Hafsten (*et al*), *Flyalarm, luftkrigen over Norge 1939-1945*, pp. 238-239.

¹⁴⁸ On 16 January 1945, it was decided at SFHQ that the issue of the bombing of key points on the main railway lines should be taken up with the air authorities. By the end of January, however, SHAEF had indicated that it did not approve of the diversion of the strategic bombing effort to an attack against Norwegian rail centres. See: PRO: minutes of meeting held at SFHQ, 16 January 1945, ref. MUS/2211/2337, in HS2/234. Internal memo from SHAEF (G-3 Division) to SFHQ, ref. SHAEF 17240/4/opsC, 25 January 1945, in HS2/235.

the result of difficult relations, but because most of the targets in Norway were more suitable for sabotage and therefore an air attack was unnecessary. Moreover, the Norwegian government was also a significant restraining influence. Nevertheless, sabotage was not always viable, and therefore in a number of high profile cases it was necessary to make use of air attack, even though the collateral damage, both physically and politically, could be significant.

Conclusion

Previous histories have tended to focus on collaboration or the lack of it between SOE and the Norwegian government and Milorg. Collaboration, however, also extended to SOE's relations with the other British and American armed forces that took an interest in Norway, and was an additional significant element in the development and implementation of its policy in this theatre. In the spring of 1942, soon after taking over from Hugh Dalton and in response to the many earlier criticisms that had been directed toward the organisation, Lord Selborne produced an examination of the current state of SOE. In this report he described relations with 'the Services' as 'cordial'.¹⁴⁹ At a local operational level within Norway, however, as this chapter has shown, the relationship was also functional and often effective.

The basis upon which this collaboration flourished, despite the difficulties in relations at a higher political level, was a shared strategic interest in this theatre. Norway was a country where other new organisations, such as Combined Operations, PWE, and OSS, along with the British and American armed services were able at little cost to undertake a small number of offensive operations against German interests. SOE's objective from an early stage was not only to contribute to these operations, but also to use collaboration as a means to achieving its own aims.

It is, however, important to recognise that the interests of the Norwegian authorities also played a significant part in these collaborative efforts. Close co-operation with SOE gave the Norwegian High Command an important say in the planning and preparation of many of the military operations in Norway, and through a policy of working with its British allies, it made a considered effort to protect Norwegian interests. This often had a major impact, as shown by the problems with subversive propaganda. Moreover, both SOE and the other organisations operating in

¹⁴⁹ PRO: paper entitled 'SOE', 10 April 1942, in HS8/898.

and around Norway were often dependent on Norwegian personnel, local intelligence, and expertise, and therefore could not regularly afford to ignore Norwegian concerns, unless a target was considered to be such a serious threat to the Allied cause, as in the case of heavy water production, that political issues were simply ignored.

The previous chapters have shown that although SOE's policy and ultimately its operations in Norway were founded on broader strategic factors, and further shaped by its relations with the Norwegian authorities and resistance, they were also often dependent upon and therefore influenced by the level of its co-operation with the other organisations operating in this theatre. Nevertheless, as the final two chapters will show, SOE undertook most of its activities in this country without the direct involvement of the other British and American agencies.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SOE OPERATIONS IN NORWAY 1940-1944: THE COMBINATION OF SABOTAGE AND THE ORGANISATION OF A CLANDESTINE ARMY

Introduction

Most of SOE's activities within Norway were prepared under its direct guidance, although with the important proviso that they were ultimately carried out in co-operation with the Norwegian authorities through FO, and later Milorg. This chapter will examine SOE operations in Norway from the autumn of 1940 until the spring of 1944, whilst the next chapter will appraise its activities within the very different context of the final twelve months of the war in Europe and during the run up to the country's eventual liberation. They will illustrate how the strategic and external political influences, which shaped policy, combined with local operational difficulties to determine the nature, extent and outcome of what was the culmination of SOE interest in this theatre, its operations.

In the first instance SOE's activities in Norway reflected the composite nature of its policy. The immediate objective was to contribute to a British 'strategy of attrition' that aimed to stretch and wear down the enemy.¹ This led to the series of attacks against major economic and military sites in Norway that commenced in 1942 and which intensified during 1943 in order to help prepare the way for an invasion of northwest Europe in 1944.² These will be examined in the first section of this chapter. Alongside this, although completely separately, SOE was to prepare the ground for future 'offensive operations' in southern Norway³ through organising a secret guerrilla army that would come into action and operate behind enemy lines in support of a landing by regular forces. From the end of 1940, therefore, operations were instigated for the purpose of making contact with, controlling, and preparing local resistance groups in the key strategic areas of the country. These operations will

¹ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

² PRO: COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB 80/68. PRO: paper entitled, 'The Prospects of Subversion: A Country by Country Analysis', 21 April 1941, in HS8/272.

³ PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), 'Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy', 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

be examined in the second section of this chapter. Norway's geographically marginal position, however, ultimately meant that a landing by a British or Allied Expeditionary force to liberate part or the whole of the country never had strategic validity or was militarily viable. This had an important impact on long-term activity as SOE and Milorg groups had to be kept in *situ* in an occupied country for an indeterminate time period and in conditions of uncertainty about the future. They were also subject to regular infiltration and break up as a result of the activities of the German and Norwegian Nazi police organisations, and plagued by a shortage of arms, equipment, and transportation. Therefore, the whole process of organising a secret army was patchy and hesitant.

By mid 1943, however, SOE was aware that Norway's subordinate position meant that its liberation was dependent on the eventual progress and success of Allied operations elsewhere in Europe. This meant that a secret army had to be adequately prepared to deal with a number of possible scenarios such as a German collapse or withdrawal, and not just an invasion, and with Allied resources concentrated elsewhere it also became apparent that clandestine forces would probably undertake a significant role in the country's liberation. Accordingly, it became progressively important to protect it from infiltration and break up by informers, who were so dangerous to its long-term integrity. As a result a number of operations were instigated to undertake the assassination of individuals who it was believed posed a serious threat to both SOE and Milorg. These will be examined in the third section of this chapter.

As these were joint operations, Norwegian interests also played a part in determining their eventual shape and outcome. Protection of Milorg and the Norwegian population from German reprisals meant that before 1944 almost all sabotage in Norway was undertaken by NIC (1) teams sent in from outside and confined to *coup de main* operations, lightning strikes by small groups against targets of agreed military or economic value. Every effort was made to give the appearance that these were British operations. Although, as the pressure to intensify sabotage increased during 1943, SOE teams began to stay in the country longer, especially in the Oslo area, and they often made use of local help. Nonetheless, by having to use only teams sent in from outside these operations were subject to the limitations imposed by the difficult weather conditions and long daylight hours found so far north. The initial attempts to organise a secret army without the full and equal

involvement of Milorg also made the whole process problematic and at times even dangerous. Nevertheless, after the changes in the internal structure of Milorg that led to the decision to work with its leadership, co-operation gradually improved. From this point SOE teams increasingly assisted Milorg groups, and it was collaboration at a local level that became the basis upon which preparations for the liberation were intensified during the final months of the occupation.

I

SOE's short-term activities in Norway prior to 1944: *coup de main* operations

SOE's short-term objective in Norway was to contribute to the application of economic and military pressure against Germany and between early 1941 and September 1944, it considered, planned, attempted, or completed at least twenty-seven *coup de main* or sabotage operations in Norway. Only thirteen of these, however, had some success, less than fifty percent, and therefore the overall scale of SOE sabotage in Norway prior to 1944 was relatively small. Seventeen operations, the majority, targeted specialist ores or the production of specialist metals, four targeted shipping, two the production and transportation of heavy water, one a frostfilet factory, one the quays at Narvik, one the rail network, and one Sola aerodrome outside Stavanger. The majority of the actions were therefore against economic targets. Preparation and planning began in the spring of 1941,⁴ and the first attempted operation against a military target in Norway by a small team sent in from Britain was undertaken in April of that year. The first major operation, 'Redshank', against the Orkla pyrite mines close to Trondheim was not, however, successfully carried out until May 1942 and only one further action was completed in that year. *Coup de main* attacks in Norway were therefore slow to get going and confined to a comparatively small time period of two years. Nevertheless, fifteen operations were considered, proposed or completed between the beginning of 1943 and summer 1944, which is when SOE attacks against strategic targets in Norway, reached their peak.⁵

In the autumn of 1940, SOE decided that using small, specially trained teams sent in from outside was the best method of sabotaging major strategic targets in

⁴ The work of classifying and studying Norwegian targets was carried out methodically and assisted by the MEW, which supplied a list of priorities. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 28 January 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

⁵ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

Norway. These teams would not be 'brought in touch' with local resistance groups, and would remain 'quite distinct' from them. They would also have 'intensive training and rehearsals for attacks on a particular objective' and only remain in the country for a short period of time before retreating across the border into Sweden.⁶ To be able to undertake these operations successfully, however, SOE needed to enlist Norwegian volunteers and provide them with the necessary training. It took twelve months from the autumn of 1940 for SOE to increase its total of fully trained Norwegian recruits from six to sixty-four.⁷ Therefore, during 1941 it was only able to carry out one sabotage action in Norway, Operation Barbara, which was a largely unsuccessful attack against the rail network around Trondheim. To obtain the required manpower, this operation used a team of eight Scandinavians recruited in Sweden. Nevertheless, it was necessary to send these men to Britain for their training, which was carried out in the Shetlands in over just three weeks by a SOE captain sent up from London. They were then returned to Norway by fishing boat, although it took three attempts before they were successfully landed on the Norwegian coast.⁸ 'Barbara' symbolises the improvised and amateurish approach that SOE was forced to adopt at a time when as a new organisation it was still building up and developing its infrastructure.⁹ To send teams into Norway from outside, whether across the North Sea or via Stockholm required transportation, and in the first half of 1941 only six sorties were flown to northwest Europe on behalf of SOE, and none to Norway. Transport was therefore confined to the handful of small fishing vessels operating out of the Shetlands Base, which were subject to the dreadful weather conditions that regularly occur off the Norwegian coastline, sidelined by the long hours of daylight in the summer, and had a regular propensity to break down.¹⁰ On top of all these logistical problems there was the Prime Minister's opposition to operations of a 'trivial' nature in Norway, which not only meant that SOE did not

⁶ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, in HS2/128.

⁷ For full details on the training of Norwegian recruits, see chapter one, pp. 43-44.

⁸ For full details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. See also: note from MZ (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to S (Lt. Colonel H. N. Sporborg), 27 February 1941, telegram from Lerwick, 8 March 1941, and telegram from Lerwick to SO2, 5 April 1941, all in HS2/207.

⁹ SOE inherited very little in terms of training establishments from its predecessors. It took over the paramilitary training schools in Scotland from MI (R) and Station VII in Hertfordshire from Section D. See: Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, pp. 729-736.

¹⁰ PRO: paper entitled 'The Organisation and Control of Special Duty (SD) Operations in northwest Europe 1940-1945' in AIR20/8224. SOE Executive Committee - weekly progress reports, week ending 21 January 1942, in HS8/220.

have backing at the highest level for its policy, but which also created a certain degree of uncertainty over its immediate direction.¹¹ There were, therefore, severe limitations on what this new organisation could achieve in this theatre before 1942.

Moreover, SOE activities were also circumscribed after its plans to set up local sabotage groups to organise attacks against selected targets had by the autumn of 1941 been postponed in deference to the sensitivity of the Norwegian government to the involvement of the civilian population in such actions.¹² Prior to this some sabotage had been attempted or undertaken inside Norway, but without large-scale local support was small and ineffectual. Malcolm Munthe's presence at the British Legation in Stockholm had provided an early opportunity to instigate operations from Swedish soil. A Norwegian volunteer recruited in Sweden and contacts that Munthe had in Oslo were behind an attack on the Oslo-Bergen railway in the winter of 1940/1941, which resulted in the blowing up of an engine in a tunnel near Voss. In July 1941, Munthe also arranged the placing of 'delayed action bomb' on a goods train that was on its way to Norway. Unfortunately the bomb went off prematurely whilst the train was at Krylbø in central Sweden. It appears that the aim was to disrupt the transportation of armaments from Germany through Sweden to Norway, but it just exacerbated relations with the Swedish authorities.¹³

These activities were minor, improvised, achieved very little, but were an early attempt to do something, move forward, and at least begin the process of making Norway a burden on Germany's war effort. At this early stage, however, SOE was not capable of launching a widespread sabotage campaign in Norway, especially without considerable local support, and therefore its efforts were little more than tokenism. More significant at this time were the preparations that SOE began for operations against the mining and production of specialist ores and metals in Norway. Early indications of intent were operations 'Gertrude' and 'Landlubber', the plans to disrupt the supplies of sulphur and ferrochrome to Germany. These were followed, probably as a result of the Prime Minister's renewed interest in interdicting the transportation of Swedish iron-ore through Norway, by a plan to revise Operation Arctic, the old MI (R) plan to sink vessels alongside the quays at Narvik.¹⁴ Alongside

¹¹ See chapter two, p. 66-67.

¹² See chapter three, pp. 103.

¹³ Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, pp. 129, 132, 149.

¹⁴ PRO: 'Reports, various – Directives and Heads of Sections plans and projects, as at 5 March 1941, in HS8/231. Letter from W.S. Churchill to the First Sea Lord, 26 December 1940, in PREM 3/328/6.

this SOE began to prepare Operation Clairvoyant its most ambitious plan for Norway,¹⁵ which apart from its scale was typical of SOE *coup de main* operations in this theatre, the influences behind them and the problems of execution. It, therefore, deserves further and closer attention.

The objective of 'Clairvoyant' was,¹⁶ through attacking the hydroelectric plants and ferries in southern Norway, to 'immobilise part of the industries in Norway' that were 'of vital importance to the enemy'. The primary target was the aluminium industry, and it was hoped that the production of aluminium oxide and metal could be stopped for at least six months.¹⁷ At the outbreak of war Norway was the sixth largest producer of this metal in the world, and after the occupation Germany decided that it would base its future expansion of the Luftwaffe on Norwegian supplies.¹⁸ Preparations for 'Clairvoyant' were protracted; they began in the spring of 1941, continued through the summer and autumn, and were ready by early 1942.¹⁹ The initial plan was to attack seven different sites in southern Norway using six parties, of which five would be dropped on the same night using up to three Halifax aircraft and one transported by fishing vessel. By the third week of January 1942, however, probably due to the difficulties of obtaining transportation, the number of targets had been reduced to four.²⁰ The implementation of the operation was far more difficult than the preparation. It proved to be impossible to obtain the necessary aircraft, either directly through the Air Ministry or by means of the COS, and as the Norwegian authorities objected to most of the targets 'Clairvoyant' was eventually

¹⁵ NHM: Consolidated Progress report of S Section, week ending 4 March 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

¹⁶ William Mackenzie mentions 'Clairvoyant' in passing but incorrectly states that not a single party was dispatched. Norwegian works do not make any reference to the operation. See: Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 206. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, and Riste, *London regjeringa*, vols. I & II.

¹⁷ PRO: letter from Lt. H. N. Sporborg to Air Vice Marshal C. E. H. Medhurst, (Air Ministry), ref. FN/NO/536, including paper entitled 'Clairvoyant', 2 January 1942, in HS2/218. For further details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway, 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

¹⁸ Norwegian aluminium production had been built up with significant British support. Normal Norwegian production was around 30,000 tonn (metric ton), but Göring planned that by 1943 this would increase to 180,000 tonn per year. The plans proved a fiasco and in 1943 Germany received only 17,256 tonn. See: Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, p. 173. Paulsen, 'Tysk økonomisk politikk i Norge 1940-1945', in Dahl (ed.), *Krigen i Norge*, pp. 77-86.

¹⁹ It was initially planned to undertake the operation in autumn 1941 but training did not begin until late September under the guidance of Captain Rudolpho and J. L. Chaworth-Musters. Special explosive devices were developed to blow-up the intake pipelines to the power stations. See: NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', weeks ending, 4 March, 29 April, 24 September 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: SOE Executive Committee - weekly progress reports for months of November and December 1941 in HS8/219.

²⁰ PRO: COS (42) 27th meeting, 24 January 1942, cited in CAB121/306. SOE Executive Committee - weekly progress report, for 21 January 1942, in HS8/220.

scaled back even further to just one attack against the important Høyanger aluminium works north of Bergen. One attempt was made to drop a sabotage team on the night of 25/26 February but owing to the poor weather conditions the aircraft was forced return to the UK. The operation was eventually postponed after members of this team were involved in a fatal car crash. It was revived the following autumn, with plans to use SOE's 'Pheasant' party to reconnoitre the site, but by the beginning of 1943 it appears to have been dropped and this time it was never resurrected.²¹

'Clairvoyant' was an over ambitious plan, especially for its time, but although it was never successfully completed it is important because it encapsulates the many factors that shaped such operations in this theatre. The primary influence was strategic, the aluminium industry in Norway, but the political concerns of the Norwegian authorities, which wished to avoid unnecessary damage to the country's economic infrastructure,²² meant that SOE was forced to curtail its ambitions. Undertaking *coup de main* operations using teams sent in from Britain, also meant that they were subject to a whole range of logistical and local operational issues, particularly the availability of transport and the weather conditions.

During 1941, SOE planned and prepared operations against several other important economic targets in Norway, such as the Knaben molybdenum mine, although this was eventually seen as more suitable for an attack by other means.²³ The target that received most attention between 1941 and 1944 was the mining and export of iron pyrites from the Orkla mines at Løkken just south west of Trondheim. The operations against this site are further examples of the array of factors that came together to shape SOE *coup de main* actions in Norway and ultimately limit what the organisation could militarily achieve. About half a million tons per annum of this raw material was exported to Germany in the years running up to the outbreak of war, which provided about twenty-five percent of its requirements of sulphur and copper. After the outbreak of war, however, as ammunition production expanded, Germany's

²¹ Høyanger was particularly important because it was the only smelting plant to have an alumina plant – alumina is processed ore, the intermediate stage in the manufacture of aluminium – which otherwise was largely imported from France and Germany. PRO: COS (42) 27th meeting, 24 January 1942, COS (42) 89, 4 February 1942, COS (42) 55, 18 February 1942, cited in CAB121/306. SOE Executive Committee - weekly reports, week ending 28 January, and fortnight ending 14 October 1942, in HS8/220 and 221. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', January and February 1942, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, p. 61.

²² PRO: letter from General Hansteen to Vice Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, 21 November 1942, in DEFE2/219.

²³ See chapter six, p. 216.

own pyrite mines quickly reached full capacity and therefore Norway became an increasingly important source of supply.²⁴ Probably owing to Charles Hambro's influence and previous contacts, the British quickly recognised the strategic importance of Orkla and by June 1941 a SOE operation called 'Burnous', a plan to attack the mine and refining process, had been put together. At the end of August, however, it was accepted that the mine was too large for SOE to be able to put it out of action for a significant length of time, and therefore it was decided to concentrate on the transportation of the ore.²⁵ This was typical of many sabotage operations in Norway in that a direct assault against the target was often ruled out and it was the local transport system or power supplies that were deemed a weak point and more suitable for an attack by a small team inserted from outside. Consequently, between May 1942 and the spring of 1944, a total of four joint SOE and FO operations using NICI (1) personnel were carried out against Orkla: a final operation 'Dodsworth' was commenced in summer 1944 but abandoned due 'strong defences' and an 'altered general situation' before it could be completed. These consisted of one attack against the transformer station that helped regulate the supply of power to the thirty-kilometre railway line between the mine and local port at Thamshavn, an attack against shipping at the port, and two attacks against the electric locomotives that transported the ore.²⁶ The regularity of these assaults illustrate the significance placed on Norwegian pyrite exports to Germany up to the summer of 1944, especially after Italy, the other major source of sulphur, was closed off in 1943.²⁷ As these attacks were directed against the transportation of the materials and not the plant, they were fully supported by the

²⁴ According to the Orkla Industrial museum nearly all its production (500,000 ton) went to Germany in the years before the war. NHM: paper entitled, 'Redshank', in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b. Information supplied by J. A. Holmen at the Orkla *Industriemuseum* (Industrial museum), in Norway. Paulson, 'Tysk økonomisk politikk i Norge 1940-1945', in Dahl (ed.), *Krigen i Norge*, p. 84. Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, pp. 58, 86. Goulter, *A Forgotten Offensive*, p. 303, 305.

²⁵ It was the MEW that argued that the plant was not worth attacking unless it could be put out of action for several months, which SOE believed was an impossible task. PRO: Reports, various – Directives and Heads of Sections, plans and projects', report as at 10 June 1941 in HS8/231. SOE Executive Committee – weekly progress reports, weeks commencing 13 and 20 August 1941, in HS8/217.

²⁶ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. PRO: 'Minutes of ANCC meetings 16 February 1942 – 26 April 1945' in HS2/138. Report on operational plans for ANCC, 9 September 1943, in HS2/236. NHM: paper entitled 'Redshank' in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b and boks 36, mappe 22/4/2, 'Dodsworth'. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 222. Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, (Oslo: NHM, 1987), p. 12.

²⁷ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 222. PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0), (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/1775, 1 October 1942, in HS2/129.

Norwegian authorities.²⁸ The location of Orkla, close to the Norwegian coast and the Swedish border also made it accessible by sea, land or air, and despite some objections by SIS the operations went ahead and had some limited success.²⁹ It appears that the first operation against the site, 'Redshank', in May 1942, reduced the transport capacity of the railway line by fifty percent for six months and by the summer of 1944, only one locomotive was left operating on the Thamshavn railway. In desperation the German authorities decided to widen the tracks so that standard Norwegian steam locomotives could be used, but the work was not finished until early May 1945, too late to be of use. Consequently, exports during the final months of the war were significantly disrupted.³⁰ Nevertheless, the actions of the plant management probably had a greater overall impact on production and deliveries to Germany. They ensured that only the poorest quality ore was exported and that production levels at the mine were forty percent lower than they could have been if the German authorities had taken over its running.³¹ The effect of sabotage was invariably only temporary and short-term.

Between 1942 and summer 1944, a further six operations were planned or undertaken against the mining and production of specialist ores in Norway. Only two, however, were successfully completed. These were Operation Kestrel against the Fosdalen iron ore mines north of Trondheim in October 1942 and Operation Company against the Arendal *Smelteverk* (furnace) at Eydehavn in southern Norway in November 1943. Production was reduced by twenty-five percent for two months at Fosdalen and at Arendal Smelteverk, which produced 4000 tons of ferro-silicum annually for Germany, production was stopped for six months.³² These attacks also

²⁸ An operation against Orkla was discussed at the first meeting of the ANCC when Leif Tronstad recommended two men for the operation, one of which was Peter Deinboll, son of the chief engineer at the mine. From this point, through the ANCC, the Norwegian authorities were directly involved in the planning and preparation of attacks against this target. See: PRO: minutes of 1st meeting of ANCC, in HS2/138.

²⁹ PRO: Report on operational plans for the ANCC, 9 September 1943, in HS2/236.

³⁰ According to German sources, only just over 56, 000 tons of pyrites were delivered to Germany from Norway in the first two months of 1945. Information supplied by J. A. Holmen at the Orkla *Industrimuseum* (Industrial museum) in Norway. NHM: paper entitled 'Redshank', in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b. Fd 5217/45, Rk Haupt, cited in Milward, *The Fascist Economy in Norway*, p. 269.

³¹ PRO: Information supplied by J. A. Holmen at the Orkla *Industrimuseum* (Industrial museum) in Norway. Statement by Thorry Kiær, Managing Director of Løkken mines, 18 July 1945, in HS7/178.

³² For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. NHM: paper entitled 'Kestrel', in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b. Letter from SOE HQ to 8627 (Nielsen) ref. N632, 14 November 1943 and letter from 8627 (Nielsen) to D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. N602, 26 September 1944, both in SOE archive, boks 19, mappe 14.1/5/1. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 223.

had the full support of the Norwegian authorities, which through NIC (1) supplied the men, provided local intelligence, and co-operated in their planning. Nevertheless, the outcome of many other operations was less satisfactory. Teams sent into Norway across the North Sea were firstly subject to the vagaries of the extreme weather conditions often found this far north, and which made operating in this theatre even more problematic and dangerous. Industrial targets were often in remote locations, especially in the north, which with the huge distances involved made access from the UK extremely difficult. On these occasions both the fishing boats and air transport were not viable, and therefore SOE was often reliant on the availability of submarines. After their arrival in occupied Norway they also had to avoid detection by the German and Norwegian security police and then overcome the extensive security measures that were put in place to protect these important industrial and military sites. It is therefore not surprising that many operations were either abandoned or ended in tragedy.

The team sent on Operation Marshfield in November 1942, an attack on the Rødsand iron ore mines south of Trondheim, disappeared without trace.³³ A second attempt to carry out Operation Seagull in February 1943, a planned attack against the mines at Sulitjelma in northern Norway, which had the capacity to produce up to 140,000 tons of pyrites per annum, ended in disaster when the submarine carrying the party vanished. A final attempt against this site in the summer of 1944, Operation Docklow, was recalled at the last moment when it was discovered that transportation of materials to Germany had ceased.³⁴ The Sulitjelma mines, although strategically important, proved too distant and inaccessible for SOE ever to carry out a successful operation against them. Operation Midhurst, the plan to attack the *frostfilet* factories in Hammerfest and Melbu in northern Norway in early 1943 was also abandoned because of security fears in the area.³⁵

SOE operations were not, however, confined to attacks against the mining or transportation of specialist ores or metals. There were other sites of strategic importance. In early 1942, the Air Ministry approached SOE to assist in an operation

³³ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. NHM: paper entitled 'Marshfield' in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b.

³⁴ Sulitjelma could also produce 30,000 tons of copper concentrate and 9000 tons of zinc concentrates per annum. For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. PRO: Operation Seagull, 'operation instruction no. 1', 14 September 1942, in HS2/177. NHM: SOE archive, boks 36, mappe 22/4/1, Operation Docklow.

³⁵ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

against the Focke-Wulf Kondor reconnaissance bombers that used Sola airfield outside Stavanger. These bombers had proved a significant threat to British merchant shipping crossing the Atlantic and therefore SOE made strenuous efforts, in co-operation with the Norwegian authorities, to sabotage the aircraft, but again the difficulties of inserting a team into the Stavanger area from outside proved insurmountable. By the spring of 1942 a party of three men was standing by ready to go and one effort to deliver them was made in the second half of May, but due to complete cloud cover the attempt was cancelled and the aircraft returned to the UK. After this, owing to the longer daylight hours, the operation was postponed and it appears that it was never resurrected.³⁶

Perhaps the best known *coup de main* operation that SOE undertook during the war is ‘Gunnarside’, the attack against the concentration plant for heavy water at Vemork in February 1943. The details of this operation have been recounted so often that they will not be repeated here.³⁷ Nevertheless, there are some important aspects to this operation that have not been extensively highlighted before and which are particularly pertinent to this thesis.

‘Gunnarside’ was one of the series of attacks planned or undertaken against heavy water production in Norway between 1941 and 1944.³⁸ SOE was involved in all of these, although ‘Gunnarside’ was significantly the first specifically joint SOE/FO operation.³⁹ The interests and involvement of the Norwegian authorities were important factors in all these attacks, but in the case of ‘Gunnarside’, they were crucial. The Norsk Hydro factory at Rjukan manufactured 200,000 tons of fertiliser per annum using the hydrogen and oxygen produced at its electrolysis plant at

³⁶ For details see: Appendix D, ‘SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944’, pp. 323-327. PRO: ‘Reports to COS’, month ending 15 June 1942, in HS8/244. Barnett, *Engage the Enemy more Closely*, pp. 200, 254, 262.

³⁷ This is just a sample of the many publications that narrate the operational details of ‘Gunnarside’. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 220-221. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*, pp. 80-104. Haukelid, *Skis Against the Atom*, pp. 70-102. T. Gallacher, *Assault in Norway*, (London: Purnell Book Services, 1975).

³⁸ Publications that examine the attacks against heavy water production in Norway have so far excluded ‘Clairvoyant’. This might be because it was eventually never undertaken, even though it is critical in understanding the nature of further operations. For example see: O.K. Grimnes, ‘The Allied heavy water operations at Rjukan’, in *Institutt for Forsvarsstudier (IFS) Info*, vol. 4, 1995, pp. 7-12.

³⁹ It is important to emphasise that this was a joint SOE/FO operation as the British histories tend to under value the Norwegian contribution. For example see: Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 654.

Vemork further up the *Vestfjord* valley.⁴⁰ Both sites were therefore two parts of a major concern that employed a large section of the local population and made a significant contribution to the Norwegian economy. Accordingly, it was always important for the Norwegian government to ensure that damage to these works and not just the local hydroelectric power station, was minimised. Consequently, FO enthusiastically promoted ‘Gunnernside’, not only because it was its suggestion, but also because it was a precision operation directed at the heavy water equipment and stocks and therefore would restrict both the economic and structural damage to the remainder of the plant.⁴¹ The intelligence supplied by Jomar Brun and Leif Tronstad also meant that a wooden mock-up of the high concentration plant could be built and used to prepare for the operation. This was an important contributory factor in ensuring that the attack was exact and ultimately successfully executed.⁴² Therefore, although ‘Gunnernside’ was typical of SOE’s *coup de main* operations in Norway in that it set out to deny Germany what was believed to be a critical war material, it was also a product of Norwegian concerns and the desire for a more measured and precise approach that would result in less long-term damage to the country’s immediate and possibly post-war industrial and commercial interests.

On the night of 27/28 February 1943, the ‘Gunnernside’ team along with the ‘Swallow’ party, which had been in the area since the failed ‘Freshman’ operation, successfully destroyed the bulk of the heavy water high concentration plant at Vemork.⁴³ This led to the loss of 400 kilograms of production, and 500 kilograms of heavy water *in situ*.⁴⁴ It did not, however, lead to the eighteen-month interruption in production that was SOE’s objective⁴⁵ and sensational and exaggerated claims that it halted Hitler’s ‘advance’ toward an atomic bomb are difficult to substantiate.⁴⁶ In

⁴⁰ PRO: ‘Appendix A to SX’s memorandum on “Clairvoyant”’, 20 December 1941, attached to a note headed ‘Lurgan’, 30 July 1942, in HS2/184.

⁴¹ PRO: letter from W. Hansteen (Norwegian Commander-in-Chief) to Vice Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, 21 November 1942, including a memo on: ‘the effect of the different alternatives of execution upon the production possibilities as a whole’ in DEFE2/219. Operation Instructions No 1, ‘Gunnernside’, 15 December 1942, in HS2/185.

⁴² PRO: paper entitled, ‘SOE Operation “Gunnernside”’, in HS2/190. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, pp. 28, 31, 35-37.

⁴³ For details see: Appendix D, ‘SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944’, pp. 323-327.

⁴⁴ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 220. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, pp. 37-38.

⁴⁵ PRO: Operation Gunnernside, ‘Outline project for Approval’, 24 November 1942, in HS2/185. Memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/512, 3 March 1943, in HS2/190.

⁴⁶ M. R. D. Foot claims that ‘Gunnernside’ scuppered Hitler’s advance towards an atomic bomb. Publications on Germany’s atomic research suggests otherwise, and show that Germany neither had the required level of technical knowledge nor made available the huge resources that would be required to

June 1943, the plant produced the highest monthly quantity heavy water of the war and transportation to Germany was quickly recommenced, which was why it was decided to bomb the site. The Germans re-established production by moving concentration cells intended for another new plant at S  heim, a few kilometres away, to Vemork, and by bringing back 100 Kgs of 97.5% partially diluted heavy water from Germany.⁴⁷ The operation, therefore, again indicates that the effect of *coup de main* attacks in Norway, although brilliantly executed, was largely only disruptive and temporary, and therefore sites, such as Orkla and Vemork, had to be regularly revisited.

‘Gunnarside’, and other operations against economic and military targets in Norway, however, did have another perhaps more valuable strategic outcome. They created local security scares that forced the German authorities to position significant troop numbers in remote areas. In March 1943, Lt. Col. Wilson expressed the view that recent operations such as ‘Gunnarside’ had kept ‘the German occupying forces on the move and on tenterhooks’.⁴⁸ And after the operation 2800 enemy soldiers were employed to search for the sabotage party on *Hardangervidda*, the mountain plateau in southern Norway. Around 5000 men were also stationed in German military barracks in the area around Orkdal close to the Orkla pyrite mine. These attacks, therefore, taken in totality made a significant contribution to SOE’s objective of ensuring that ‘as far as possible’ it did everything within its power to increase ‘Germany’s security commitments’ in Norway.⁴⁹

Although the origins of *coup de main* attacks were strategic, not only their form but also the nature of their implementation was influenced by Norwegian concerns. Despite being SOE/FO collaborations local Milorg groups had no direct

produce an atomic bomb. Foot, *SOE in the Low Countries*, p. 74. See: Dahl, *Heavy Water and the Wartime Race for Nuclear Energy*, pp. 191-192. Grimnes, ‘The Allied heavy water operations at Rjukan’, pp. 9-10. J. Cornwell, *Hitler’s Scientists*, (London: Viking, 2003), pp. 318, 319, 320, 321, 335, 403-4.

⁴⁷ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to A/CD, ref. SN/1469, 10 August 1943, in HS2/187. Brun, *Brennpunkt Vemork*, p. 74. A. Olsen, *Norsk Hydro gjennom 50   r: et eventyr for realitetens verden*, (Oslo: Norsk Hydro K  velslotaktieselskab, 1955), p. 417.

⁴⁸ PRO: paper entitled ‘Chiefs of Staff Directive to SOE for 1943’, attached to a note from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/Plans, 30 March 1943, in HS8/330.

⁴⁹ PRO: ‘Resume of SOE Activities in Various Theatres of War’, ref. Plans/450/670, 25 June 1943, in HS8/199. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 220-221. Information provided by J. A. Holmen at the Orkla *Industrimuseum* (industrial museum).

involvement in carrying out these operations.⁵⁰ The aim was to give the appearance that they were purely British and thereby avoid possible reprisals against the local population and resistance groups. During the first SOE *coup de main* attack in Norway in May 1942 - Operation Redshank - the party took a parachute badge with them, which it was planned would be left behind to indicate that the British had carried out the attack. The 'Gunnarside' team wore British uniforms and even brought uniforms with them for the 'Swallow' party.⁵¹ By making these operations appear British, SOE *coup de main* operations did not on the whole result in widespread reprisals against the local population, so politically they did not present SOE with any significant problems. After 'Redshank', the Germans took six hostages, who were held responsible for any further actions. But despite the later attacks it does not appear that any major retribution was inflicted on the area. After 'Gunnarside' the Germans eventually arrested around 250 Norwegians, burnt down mountain huts, and forced members of the local resistance to go under cover or flee, but there were no extensive loss of life. The exception was Operation Kestrel, which along with 'Musketoon', and the killing of two German soldiers by members of SOE's 'Heron' team, led to the series of arrests in the counties of Trøndelag, Nordland, and Troms and the eventual execution of thirty-four Norwegians. In this case, however, it was the unique occurrence of all three operations happening within a few weeks of each other and in close proximity, which gave the Germans an excuse to institute a wave of terror in the region. Furthermore, although these activities undoubtedly made conditions extremely difficult for local resistance groups, which were often broken up or forced to go into hiding, they had all been approved by the Norwegian military authorities through the ANCC and were undertaken by men from a unit of the Royal Norwegian army. They were therefore joint operations and they did not result in any major difficulties for SOE. According to Lt. Colonel Wilson, Oscar Torp, the Norwegian Minister of Defence consistently withstood every attempt to make reprisals 'a political instead of a military question'.⁵²

⁵⁰ SOE *coup de main* teams did receive help from local people who often belonged to the local resistance. The 'Grouse' team received local help with food and supplies. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*, pp. 57-59.

⁵¹ PRO: 'SOE Weekly Progress reports', week ending 18 May 1942, in HS8/220. Memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CD (0) (Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. SN/512, 3 March 1942, in HS2/190. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*, p. 84.

⁵² NHM: paper entitled 'Kestrel', in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/8b. PRO: letter from SOE HQ D/S, (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen), ref. N16, 23 January 1944. Information provided by J. A. Holmen at the Orkla *Industriemuseum* (industrial museum). Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 165-167,

As the strategic priority in northwest Europe during 1943 was to help prepare the way for an invasion in 1944, it became increasingly important to maintain the pressure on Germany, deny it important resources and to ensure its forces remained stretched across the European mainland and Scandinavia. SOE was, therefore, instructed to prioritise and prepare attacks not only against 'industrial targets' but also coastal shipping and German communications.⁵³ In the Oslo area this led, through operations 'Chaffinch', 'Mardonius', 'Bundle', and 'Goldfinch', to a number of attacks against enemy vessels. Notwithstanding this in the two years between the spring of 1943 and the spring of 1945 only six ships were significantly damaged by sabotage, and therefore it appears that SOE's efforts had only a very limited impact.⁵⁴ Moreover, the reservations within SOE regarding attacks against the Norwegian rail network because of the 'political issues' involved, and the instructions from the COS that such operations should be avoided until the 'moment to strike' came, had an important impact on the nature and timing of this category of operation. In October 1943, COSSAC instructed SOE to plan for the 'possible future interruption of railway communications', although no overt action was permitted without authority.⁵⁵ Consequently, the three teams, 'Grebe', 'Lapwing', and 'Fieldfare', and the leader of a fourth operation, 'Woodpecker', which between the autumn of 1943 and the spring of 1944 were parachuted into Norway with variable success, were only instructed to reconnoitre the railways with a view to future action. They would only disrupt enemy troop movements in the case of either an Allied invasion or a German withdrawal from Norway.⁵⁶ These teams therefore had a long wait often in difficult conditions, as it was not until the end of 1944, when it was agreed that the transfer of German divisions from Norway could be a potential threat to the Allied advance into Germany, that they were called into action.

220-221.

⁵³ PRO: paper entitled, 'Directive for Future Sabotage policy in Norway', from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. ADE/20, in HS2/128.

⁵⁴ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

⁵⁵ See chapter two, p. 73. PRO: paper entitled 'Chiefs of Staff Directive to SOE for 1943, attached to a note from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) from D/Plans, 30 March 1943, in HS8/330. COS (43) 142 (0), 'Special Operations Executive Directive for 1943', 20 March 1943, in CAB80/68. NHM: paper entitled 'Actions against German Controlled Norwegian State railways', in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/21.

⁵⁶ For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 342-345. NHM: paper entitled 'Actions against German Controlled Norwegian State railways', in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/21.

Despite the increased importance placed on sabotage during 1943, it was also still only NIC (1) teams that undertook *coup de main* operations in Norway on behalf of SOE and Norwegian authorities. Nevertheless, there were the first signs of a change in the nature of these operations: a change that became widespread during 1944. The increased emphasis placed on attacks against targets of value to Germany led to the instruction from SOE for its 'organisations' in the 'more populated' areas of Norway to engage in 'open' sabotage,⁵⁷ and this ultimately had a significant impact at a local operational level. NIC (1) teams began to stay in the country, especially around Oslo and Bergen, for longer periods, sometimes several months, and often undertook a number of tasks, including weapons instruction and sabotage.⁵⁸ They also began to make use of local recruits, sometimes from Milorg, to directly assist them in carrying out an operation. 'Mardonius', the operation to sink enemy shipping in Oslo harbour during the spring of 1943 stayed in Norway for several weeks. There was particularly stringent security around the Oslo port area and therefore it took a great deal of preparation before any attacks could be undertaken. The team of two, Max Manus and Gregers Gram, was also instructed to train local volunteers and eventually received considerable help from employees at the workshops where enemy ships were repaired. Sigurd Jacobsen, who had 'quite a high position' within Milorg, provided considerable assistance by placing limpet mines on three vessels, although none of these exploded.⁵⁹ SOE's final operation against the heavy water produced at Vemork was carried out in early 1944.⁶⁰ On 20 February, a team of Norwegian saboteurs including Knut Haukelid, who had arrived in Norway as part of the 'Gunnarside' team, sank the train ferry that linked the railheads at either end of Lake Tinnsjø, east of Rjukan. On board the ferry were most of the remaining stocks of diluted heavy water, which the Germans were transporting back home after deciding

⁵⁷ PRO: 'Directive for Future Sabotage Policy in Norway', from AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), ref. ADE/20, 31 May 1943 in HS2/233. See also: chapter two, pp. 73-74, & chapter four, p. 147.

⁵⁸ In September 1943, Operation Redwing was sent to Bergen to form a sabotage and liquidation group. Operation Chaffinch, which was dropped in Norway in January 1943, was instructed to train local groups and carry out shipping sabotage. It also developed close links with SL. For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. NHM: 'Operation Instructions for Redwing', in SOE archive, boks 29, mappe 20.2/1/8. 'Operation Instructions for Chaffinch', part II, in SOE archive, boks20, mappe 14.2/1/3. PRO: reports from and interrogations of Tor Stenersen, 7 June 1943, 23 August and 23 September 1943, in HS2/243.

⁵⁹ Manus, *Underwater Saboteur*, pp. 41, 54. For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327.

⁶⁰ For details see: Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 221-222. Haukelid, *Skis Against the Atom*, pp. 155-170.

the previous December to end production. Militarily it was largely a successful operation, although fourteen civilians lost their lives.⁶¹ The objective was once again to interdict the supply of a major war material to Germany and despite a clear risk to the local population the operation was approved by the Norwegian Minister of Defence, seemingly with little hesitation.⁶² It was, however, particularly significant because it was organised and undertaken by a SOE operative who had been in the country for a long period, in direct collaboration with Knut Lier Hansen from Milorg and Rolf Sørli, the leader of '*B-org*' (the industrial resistance organisation) in Rjukan. It was, therefore, a joint operation involving SOE and local resistance members and indicative of how sabotage would be carried out in Norway during the final months of the occupation.⁶³

Whilst Milorg's official policy continued as before: to keep their organisation intact and not to become active prior to the liberation, especially if operations could be carried out by groups sent in from outside in British uniform,⁶⁴ widespread collaboration between Milorg and SOE on sabotage operations was still several months away. Therefore, despite the increased emphasis placed on attacks against strategic targets at this time, until conditions within Norway altered significantly, sabotage remained primarily a SOE and FO responsibility. There were signs, however, that the political context within Norway was beginning to change. For

⁶¹ At the end of March 1944, after Knut Haukelid's report on the sinking of the Tinnsjø ferry arrived at HQ, SOE's security section (BSS) raised doubts over its accuracy. These were eventually dismissed by Rear Admiral A.H. Taylor, the SOE's Naval Director (D/Navy). The historian, David Irving, has questioned the success of the operation. He quotes Doctor Kurt Diebner, a leading figure in Germany's atomic research project, who claimed that the Germans had 'got wind' of the planned sabotage operation, and that the drums on the ferry had been filled with water and the heavy water had been transported by road. SOE had important contacts within Norsk Hydro, including Gunnar Syverstad a laboratory assistant and Alf Larsen an engineer at Vemork, who confirmed that over ninety barrels containing over 600Kgs were destroyed by the operation, although four barrels were retrieved. A small amount of heavy water was later sent out of the country via Oslo. The heavy water apparatus at Vemork was dismantled in August 1944 and taken back to Germany. After the war the barrels of heavy water were recovered from the bottom of Lake Tinnsjø. For details see: PRO: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. Wilson) to CD (Major-General Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. DS/384 1 March 1944, memo from BSS/A to BSS, ref. BSSA/KV/1180, 23 March 1944, memo from AD/P to A/CD, ref. ADP/9/1502, 20 May 1944, telegram from Swallow Brown, 18 September 1944, all in HS2/188. D. Irving, *The Virus House*, (London: William Kimber, 1967), pp. 181-193. A. Olsen, *Norsk Hydro gjennom 50 år*, pp. 421-422. 'The Real heroes of Telemark', a documentary about the 'Grouse' and 'Gunnarside' operations, broadcast by BBC Bristol, September/October 2003.

⁶² PRO: note from ST (Leif Tronstad) to DS (Lt. Col. Wilson) ref. 2021, 7 February 1944, in HS2/188.

⁶³ PRO: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. Wilson) to CD (Major General Colin McV. Gubbins), ref. DS/384, 1 March 1944, and report by G. Syverstad, 25 March 1943 (made in Stockholm), both in HS2/188. Haukelid, *Skis against the Atom*, pp. 155-170.

⁶⁴ Letter from Ole Berg to the Norwegian Minister of Defence, 22 June 1943, cited in Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, p. 7.

example there was a growing willingness and eagerness within the ranks of Milorg to become active, and this along with other events, would have a significant impact upon the nature of sabotage operations in Norway during the final months of the occupation.

II

SOE long-term local operations in Norway: the creation of a Clandestine Army under British control

Whilst SOE pursued its objective of attacking economic and military targets it also implemented its long-term aim of organising and preparing a clandestine guerrilla army in Norway. Therefore, between autumn 1940 and late spring 1944 at least sixty SOE operations were sent into Norway by sea, air, or across the Swedish border, with the aim of organising local groups into fighting units that through cutting lines of communication and carrying out acts of sabotage behind enemy lines, could support operations by regular forces. This section will not be a narrative of all these operations.⁶⁵ Long-term activities will be examined in broad terms to show how they evolved in response to strategic developments and political factors, not only relations between SOE and the Norwegian authorities but also conditions within occupied Norway.

After Section D's first operation in Norway in June 1940 and through Malcolm Munthe in Stockholm contact was continued and developed during the summer and autumn of 1940 with resistance groups in western Norway, Trondheim and around Oslo.⁶⁶ SOE's early policy was also to recruit Norwegians in Britain, who would then be made ready to return home in order to organise local 'cells' that would together form a general movement leading to a rebellion against the German occupation.⁶⁷ SOE's first operation from the newly established Shetlands Base in

⁶⁵ For details see: Appendix D, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-358.

⁶⁶ Whilst working for MI (R) in Bergen with Andrew Croft in December 1939 Munthe made contact with Ivar Borge, whose father owned 'Interspeds' a shipping firm. Munthe also made contact with an organisation called 'Delphin' in Oslo, run by a jeweller called Prytz, and from Trondheim he was contacted by Johnny and Arthur Pevik, and Odd Sørli, who became the basis of the 'Lark' operation in 1942. See: PRO: 'Report from Munthe in Stockholm', 31 September 1940, in HS2/228. 'Some notes on the German Occupation of Bergen and the return to England', by A. Croft, ref. SCA/II/4/5, April 1940, in HS8/261. File note dated 6 August in HS2/242. NHM: report entitled 'Lark', in SOE archive, boks 35b, mappe 22/3/1. Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, p. 123. Haga, *Natt på Norskekysten*, pp. 27-39.

⁶⁷ PRO: paper entitled, 'Rebellion in Norway', 6 August 1940 in HS2/128. Paper entitled, 'Norway', 1 September 1940, in HS2/240.

November 1940 was an attempt to build on previous contact with groups in the Bergen area and to begin the groundwork for the development of a resistance network in southern Norway. Unfortunately the *Abwehr*, the German military intelligence organisation, had infiltrated the boat crew and all three SOE agents were arrested soon after landing in Norway and later executed. This was a very early example and a warning of how dangerous enemy agents would be to SOE activities in Norway.⁶⁸

After the policy of rebellion had been replaced by plans to organise an armed and trained secret guerrilla army based in the key strategic areas of Norway,⁶⁹ two new important operations were put together. 'Claribel' was a scheme to use resistance organisations across northwest Europe, including Norway, to attack lines of communications or cause general disruption behind enemy lines and thereby spoil any attempt by Germany to invade Britain. The scheme for Norway was called 'Claribel A'. It was believed that conditions in the country, the emergence of resistance groups under SOE control, made it an ideal location to undertake guerrilla operations against enemy shipping and aircraft if the need ever arose. Fortunately the plan never had to be used and in March 1942 was abandoned.⁷⁰ From the spring of 1941, SOE also began to implement Operation Cockfight, its generic plan for developing a decentralised clandestine army in Norway consisting of armed and trained local resistance groups all under its control.⁷¹ It initially consisted of three strands. Firstly, the attempts made during 1941 to bring back members of resistance groups, including Milorg, to Britain for training before sending them back to Norway to continue the preparation of their own organisations. This had some success but was restricted by the availability of transport, the handful of fishing boats at the Shetlands Base, and the difficult conditions that these boats had to operate under. Nevertheless, the contact

⁶⁸ For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-358. PRO: 'Report on Melancton Rasmussen and Frithof Pedersen', (undated), in HS2/242. NHM: list of Shetland sea-sorties in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c. T. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 60-61.

⁶⁹ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, in HS2/128.

⁷⁰ Unfortunately the 'Claribel' files for Norway appear to have disappeared. Nevertheless the 'Claribel' files for Denmark and the Headquarter files provide some guide to plans for Norway. PRO: file HS2/82, 'Claribel' (Denmark). 'Reports, various – Directives and Heads of Section - plans and projects' as at 5 March 1941 and 8 March 1941, in HS8/231. Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance*, p. 81.

⁷¹ There is no specific file on 'Cockfight' in the SOE archives in London or Oslo. In progress reports it is described as a project for 'the establishment of a Secret Army in Norway'. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', during 1941 & 1942, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/8/3b. PRO: 'Reports, various – Directives and Heads of sections plans and projects' as at 15 November 1941, in HS8/231.

that was established with Milorg's leadership and with the Sørli group in Trondheim meant that eventually a handful of men were brought back to the UK. By the autumn of 1941, however, by which time the Milorg leadership had not only been hit by a series of arrests but had turned to its government in London for authority, this aspect of 'Cockfight' was no longer viable.⁷² The second part of the plan was to set up a series of arms dumps in key locations across Norway, but by the end of 1941 only one had been established at Hammersett, southwest of Trondheim, and some arms and equipment delivered with the 'Archer' team to Selvær off the coast of Nordland.⁷³ Lastly, SOE set out to send its own teams, made up of recruits trained in Britain, to the key strategic areas of Norway to make contact with and prepare local resistance groups, or to establish new organisations. The objective was that they would all be armed, organised, and trained in guerrilla warfare, and through W/T put in direct contact with and therefore placed under the supervision of SOE Headquarters.⁷⁴ In the first half of 1941, however, only one operation, 'Cheese', was sent to southern Norway for the purpose of working with and developing local resistance groups.⁷⁵ As with *coup de main* operations a shortage of trained recruits, insufficient transportation, and terrible weather conditions, particularly during the autumn of 1941 slowed the implementation of 'Cockfight'.⁷⁶

During the 1941-1942 season, however, by which time SOE had a significant pool of prepared volunteers to call on, a total of fifteen operations were eventually sent to the pivotal areas of Norway from Mosjøen in the north, along the west coast from Trondheim to Stavanger, on the east and west side of Oslo fjord, and in the valleys running north and west from the Oslo region. The bulk were, therefore, located in southern Norway where it was initially believed 'offensive operations'

⁷² For details see chapter four, p. 126. NHM: 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section' during 1941, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. List of Shetland sea sorties, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe, 10/5/6c.

⁷³ PRO: paper entitled 'Norwegian Policy', 11 December 1940, in HS2/128. Paper entitled 'Directive to the Military Organisation in Norway, 17 July 1941, in HS2/231.

⁷⁴ For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945, pp. 334-338.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ On 17 December six SOE agents were ready to be dropped into Norway. Due to the severity of the weather two of them had been waiting for seven weeks. PRO: 'SOE Executive Committee - weekly progress reports', weeks commencing 3 December 1941 and 17 December, in HS8/219.

might occur.⁷⁷ Beginning with Operation Letterbox in September 1941, and finishing with Operation Raven the following April, these consisted of teams usually made up of an organiser, W/T operator and possibly an arms instructor. In addition over eighty tons of arms and equipment were delivered to a range of locations along the coastline and inland in order that the preparation of local groups could begin.⁷⁸

By the summer of 1942, however, due to an array of difficulties, Operation Cockfight had achieved relatively little. The shortage of available transport continued especially airdrops.⁷⁹ The restrictions associated with working in the hostile environment found this far north were a continual problem and a significant limiting factor on SOE activities. Operations were regularly held up by the severe conditions found in the North Sea and there were frequent problems with radio equipment.⁸⁰ The nature of the occupation and the conditions within Norway were also a major barrier to progress. In the small isolated communities that are characteristic of Norway, the arrival of strangers was quickly noted and regularly brought to the attention of the local German security police or Norwegian informers. By the summer SOE had recognised that there was ‘still a tendency to overrate the loyalty of relatives and former friends’, and ‘to underrate the enemy’s contre-espionage [*sic*] service’. Five of the thirteen arms dumps that were eventually established during the 1941/42 season had been captured,⁸¹ and during 1942, six of the fifteen long-term operations that had been sent to Norway were broken up by the German security and Norwegian Nazi police organisations through the use of local agents and informers.⁸² This had severe and tragic consequences for the civilian population as well as important repercussions

⁷⁷ For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’, pp. 334-338. I have considered ‘Archer’ and ‘Heron’ to be two separate operations. PRO: COS (40) 27 (0), ‘Subversive Activities in Relation to Strategy’, 25 November 1940, in CAB 80/56.

⁷⁸ For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’, pp. 334-358. PRO: Operation Instructions for ‘Crow’, 1 January 1942, in HS2/152. Operation Instructions for ‘Raven’, 3 April 1942, in HS2/162. Operation Instructions for ‘Lark’ W/T Operator and two Instructors in Mines, Arms and Devices, 7 March 1942, in HS2/159.

⁷⁹ The Shetlands boats made 33 journeys during the 1941/2 season to land or pick-up SOE agents or deliver arms. There were only four airdrops made to Norway on behalf of SOE at the same time. NHM: list of Shetland sea sorties, in SOE archive, boks 9, mappe 10/5/6c. Egner, *BBC: Kanoner spiller Chopin*, p. 38.

⁸⁰ Operation Arquebus was typical of the difficulties that SOE faced in undertaking such activities. PRO: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Major John Rognes, 2 July 1942, in HS2/139. For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’, p. 334.

⁸¹ PRO: paper entitled, SOE Long-Term Policy in Norway, ref. JSW/1400, 21 September 1942, in HS2/128.

⁸² These were operations: ‘Archer/Heron’, ‘Crow’, ‘Lark’, ‘Anchor’, ‘Mallard’, and ‘Penguin’. For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’, pp. 334-337.

for SOE. Both the tragedy at Televåg near Bergen and the arrests and executions undertaken after the break up of Operation Heron in the autumn of 1942, which have previously been blamed on the activities of SOE and SIS, were at least partially the result of the work of Norwegian agents.⁸³ Altogether this meant that the effort to organise a secret army proved to be extremely problematic, especially whilst SOE and its agents faced a severe and ongoing threat. Instead of building for the future, the organisation was continually on the defensive, as is exemplified by the following examples.

After the capture of the 'Crow' W/T operator Ernst Jacobsen in July 1942, he agreed to work for the Germans and transmit messages back to Britain under Gestapo supervision. Fortunately, due to intelligence from a source in Stockholm, SOE was quickly informed about Jacobsen and therefore aware that the messages he sent during the summer of 1942 were under outside control.⁸⁴ In May 1942, however, Tor Gulbrandsen, the organiser for Operation Anchor, a plan to organise guerrilla groups along the west side of Oslo fjord, was arrested by the Gestapo. After agreeing to work for the Germans he was in September 1942 allowed to escape and he eventually returned to Britain via Sweden, from where he was instructed to supply information on SOE and its agents using either letters sent to cover addresses in Oslo or through a locally obtained radio set. The initial interrogations of Gulbrandsen by SOE and MI5 failed to pick up that he was effectively an enemy spy, and it was only in late January 1943, owing to information supplied by Ernst Jacobsen, that SOE learnt that the Germans had recruited Gulbrandsen. A plan was then put together to use him to send misinformation back to Norway, so as to deceive the Germans as to SOE's intentions, but it seems that Operation Omelette, as this was called, was never carried out.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, both operations illustrate how effectively and quickly the German

⁸³ A Norwegian employed by the Abwehr had initially led the German authorities to take an interest in SOE's contact near Televåg, and a Norwegian agent Rolf Hammer had infiltrated the 'Heron' operation. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 102, 256. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 156-158. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 337.

⁸⁴ In August 1942, Didrik Nilsen, the Milorg District Leader for eastern Norway arrived in Stockholm and advised SOE of Jacobsen's capture. See: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 335. PRO: KV2/828 – MI5 file on Ernst Jacobsen.

⁸⁵ Why 'Omelette' was never undertaken is not revealed in the files. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 340. p. 337. PRO: KV2/829, Gulbrandsen's MI5 file. *Avhør* (interrogation) av Fehmer, 11 June 1945, ved *kriminalbetjentene* Nytrøen og Biltvedt, p. 9, cited in Pryser, *Hitler's hemmelige agenter*, p. 206.

authorities infiltrated SOE operations, broke them up and attempted to use them for their own purpose.

By the summer of 1942, therefore, there was little semblance of a clandestine army in Norway. Despite the early emphasis that Britain had placed on the contribution of secret armies across occupied Europe, conditions within these countries were a significant limiting factor on the implementation of this policy. In the highly unlikely event of a landing by a British Expeditionary force in Norway in 1942, it seems improbable that it would have had any support from guerrilla groups operating behind enemy lines. Therefore strategic ambition was alone not enough. Organising local resistance groups into a viable military force was dependent on local conditions, not least the occupying regime in Norway and its security network, which was quick to take the offensive against SOE in order to nullify any attempt it made to operate within the country.

From early 1942 the development of a secret army in Norway was also a joint effort by SOE and FO using the forum of the ANCC, and involving Milorg. The relationship between these parties also had an important impact on operations at a local level. Owing to its distrust and dislike of Milorg's centralised structure, SOE sponsored organisations and local Milorg groups were largely developed separately up until the autumn of 1942. This was the result of the decision to create two 'distinct' organisations across the regions of in Norway; a policy that ultimately held back attempts to organise a clandestine army. SOE teams arrived from Britain unannounced and attempted to work independently in areas where local Milorg groups retained links with SL, which created a series of difficulties.⁸⁶ SOE, eventually supported by FO, was not, however, instigating a deliberate policy of complete non co-operation with Milorg as an organisation. It was attempting to operate in a manner that ensured that its teams did not become entangled with the leadership in Oslo.⁸⁷ The instructions issued to SOE teams were that the groups that they worked with should be 'isolated' as 'far as possible' from other groups within

⁸⁶Operation 'Anvil' was to establish W/T contact and organise guerrilla groups in the Lillehammer area. The unannounced arrival of the 'Anvil' organiser, Jon Gunleiksrud, meant that local Milorg groups initially treated him as an agent provocateur. Several messages were transmitted to London by 'Anvil' saying that Oslo insisted on asserting its authority in the district. The reply from London was that this contact must be broken. Nevertheless, instructions kept arriving from Oslo, which continued to cause tension. See: NHM: 'Anvil Operation Instructions' (undated) and 'Anvil messages' in SOE archive, boks 39, mappe 23/1/1 & 23/2/1.

⁸⁷ See chapter four, pp. 131-132.

their area in an 'urgent need for security' and to avoid the break-up of local organisations that had previously occurred because of a 'common link to the central organisation'.⁸⁸ It was, however, an approach that within the conditions of occupied Norway proved to be unrealistic and contact with Oslo was unavoidable. Tor Stenersen, the organiser for Operation Crow, was asked to make his radio available for SL so that it could communicate direct with the Norwegian authorities in London. He met Einar Skinnerland, the 'Grouse' organiser, who was also in touch with the leadership in Oslo, as were several of the other NIC (1) teams that had arrived in Norway during the spring. In June 1942, Lt. Col. Wilson expressed his frustration that SOE teams had become 'mixed up with Oslo HQ', something that SOE 'wanted to avoid'.⁸⁹ Relations were particularly difficult in the area around Kristiansand and Flekkefjord on the southern tip of Norway, where the NIC (1) team and the Milorg district organisation co-existed in a state of hostility from summer 1942. It appears that the local resistance had built up an impression, possibly from SOE, that there would be an Allied invasion in 1942. This, it has been claimed, led them to organise too fast, resulting in lax security and ultimately penetration by local police forces. Although, SOE accepted that it might have created the expectation of a landing in Norway,⁹⁰ the real significance of this local difficulty was that it represented the inevitable problems and dangers that resulted from a political decision that allowed two underground organisations with different views over their role, to operate often in close proximity. Regular intervention from SL, which was attempting to both assert its authority across southern Norway and obtain access to the W/T contact that SOE groups had with the UK, also exacerbated the situation. All of this severely disrupted

⁸⁸ Sverre Kjelstadli argues that SOE teams were instructed to avoid 'contact and co-operation with Milorg'. The operational instructions issued at the time do not appear to confirm this. NHM: 'Anvil Operation Instructions' (undated), in SOE archive, boks 39, mappe 23/1/1. PRO: Operation Instructions for Crow, 1 January 1942 in HS2/152. Paper headed 'Crow', ref. DCE/G.2., 1 January 1943, in HS2/153. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 182.

⁸⁹ Operations 'Anvil', 'Crow', 'Mallard', 'Cheese II', 'Anchor', and 'Grouse' all had some contact with Milorg HQ or the local leadership of Milorg. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945, pp. 335-338. PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE in Norway and the Secret Military organisation', ref. JSW/788, 25 June 1942, in HS2/232. Report by 'Crow' organiser E.N. Stenersen, on meetings with SMO (Milorg), 28 May 1942, in HS2/152.

⁹⁰ Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson appears to accept that SOE operations had at least created an expectation of a landing in Norway. PRO: paper entitled, 'Norway-Future Planning', ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942, in HS2/128. FA, FO IV, hylle 15, mappe "Tyske kontraspionasje: Sydligge" sak nr. 3, cited in Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 171.

the progress of several SOE operations and had serious repercussions for Milorg.⁹¹ Therefore, despite the strategic and military emphasis placed on secret armies, political decisions made in London that failed to understand or take account of local conditions ultimately led to serious difficulties.

The development of relations and contact between SOE/FO in London and SL in Oslo had an impact on the development of long-term plans and operations in Norway in one other important way. Milorg was directly under the authority of its government in London, but if it was to have day to day involvement in decisions regarding the organisation and use of a clandestine army in Norway it had to have a direct W/T link with Britain. Moreover, if Milorg was to be brought under effective control by FO, communication also had to be improved with its leadership in Oslo. Einar Skinnerland, organiser for the 'Grouse' party had originally been sent to Britain in March 1942 by Milorg to obtain consent for a direct radio link with the UK.⁹² In early 1942, FO had also expressed a desire to have a W/T operator sent to Oslo, and consequently in May an agreement was finally reached with Rolf Palmstrøm, Milorg's signals-chief. This led in September 1942 to Operation Plover, Per Solnordal, who was sent to Norway to establish the first W/T link between SL and FO and SOE in London. Solnordal was, however, owing to the activities of a Norwegian agent employed by the *Abwehr*, arrested at the end of 1942. It was only after the arrival of Operation Thrush, Norman Gabrielsen and Operation Curlew, Knut Haugland and Gunnar Sønsteby, in the autumn of 1943, that communication between London and Oslo was finally placed on a sound and reliable long-term footing.⁹³

In the meantime, in response to changes within Milorg in the summer of 1942, it was decided where possible to base the future development of a clandestine army in Norway on an amalgam of SOE and Milorg groups.⁹⁴ In recognition of this the name 'Cockfight', which symbolised SOE's vision of a guerrilla army under its direct

⁹¹ After the incident at Televåg and Majavatn many resistance members had to flee the country or were arrested, and local Milorg groups were badly hit. See: Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, p. 16. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 158-167.

⁹² NHM: note from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson to Lt. Col. Øen, ref. JSW/1448, 3 August 1943, in FO IV archive, boks 93.

⁹³ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/CE (Lt. Col. Roche), 11 November 1943, in HS2/245. NHM: 'Report on the Wireless Service between SL and UK from the autumn of 1943 to April 1944' by Lt. K. Haugland, in SOE archive, boks 22, mappe, 15/3/1. Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 337. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, p. 130.

⁹⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Long-Term Policy in Norway', ref. JSW/1400, 21 September 1942, in HS2/128. 'Direction for groups with special tasks in Norway', 25 September 1942, in HS2/232.

control, was dropped and replaced by the broad term 'secret army' to cover the underground organisation that would be formed in Norway by SOE and FO jointly.⁹⁵ From the autumn of 1942 until the late spring of 1944, close to forty NIC (1) teams or individuals were sent into Norway in order to continue the process of organising and preparing this army. Conditions within Norway, the infiltration of informers and the work of the local police organisations meant, however, that during 1943 many of these activities, such as the 'Lark' operations in Trondheim, the 'Falcon' operations in Nordland, and the 'Sandpiper' operation in the south, were often no more than attempts to re-build local networks in areas where previous resistance groups had been broken up.⁹⁶ It was also felt that it was 'difficult to organise for "The Day" in secrecy without even a vague idea of the interval of time that may elapse'.⁹⁷ This uncertainty over Norway's future owing to its peripheral position meant that SOE accepted that not only could no indication be given by its teams that an invasion was pending, but also that although the organisation of a secret army during 1943 should continue, it would not have the same degree of urgency.⁹⁸ In the meantime the military priority was *coup de main* operations. Moreover, with operational priorities elsewhere material for Norway continued to be extremely limited and therefore this embryonic clandestine army remained largely unarmed and unprepared. During 1943, only 192 containers with arms and equipment were dropped into Norway compared with 5,299 containers delivered to France during the same period.⁹⁹ Nevertheless, despite nervousness over its centralisation, SOE teams began to work with the Milorg leadership and its local organisations, especially in eastern Norway where it was strongest. Operations such as 'Chaffinch', 'Puffin', and 'Goldfinch' all worked closely with SL during 1943.¹⁰⁰ In the other districts of Norway, however, around

⁹⁵ NHM: Consolidated Progress reports of S Section, weeks ending 4 November and 4 December 1942, in SOE archive boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

⁹⁶ For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 334-358. PRO: paper entitled 'Norway – Future Planning', JSW/658, 5 June 1942, in HS2/128. NHM: 'Falcon' reports in SOE archive, boks 44, mappe 40/3/2.

⁹⁷ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norway – Future Planning: Some General Observations', ref. JSW/658, 5 June 1942, in HS2/128.

⁹⁸ PRO: 'Operation Instructions for Grouse', 31 August 1942, in HS2/172. NHM: Consolidated Progress reports of S Section, 26 February to 13 March 1943, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. See chapter two, p. 73.

⁹⁹ NHM: 'Air Transport Operations', Appendix K, in SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's file, mappe 10/8/1. Foot, *SOE in France*, p. 474.

¹⁰⁰ The operations 'Chaffinch' and 'Puffin' were sent into the Oslo region in January and April 1942 respectively to work with the central leadership of Milorg. PRO: NHM: Operation Instructions for Puffin, 10 April 1943, in SOE archive, boks 14, mappe 13/1/2. Operation Instructions for Chaffinch, part II', November 1942, in SOE archive boks 20, mappe 14.2/1/3.

Stavanger for example with Operation Osprey, and north of Trondheim with Operation Martin, where it was often weak or non-existent, NIC (1) teams either took much longer to strike up a working relationship with Milorg or continued with attempts to organise their own local groups.¹⁰¹

By June 1943, however, the possible impact on Norway of Allied plans for northwest Europe began to reshape the preparation of a secret army. The possibility of a German withdrawal from the country and the implementation of a scorched-earth policy meant that SOE and FO agreed that long-term operations in Norway should incorporate both 'defensive and preservative' measures.¹⁰² Therefore, from the end of 1943 and through 1944, NIC (1) teams were also instructed to prepare protective measures against important local industries and communications networks should German forces adopt such a policy. It appears that the first NIC (1) team that went into Norway with orders to undertake such measures was 'Sandpiper' on 10 December 1943, followed in January 1944 by 'Antrum Green' and in February by the 'Merlin' team that was sent to the Bergen area.¹⁰³ These were small beginnings, but during the second half of 1944, in co-operation with Milorg, they would become part of a massive and widespread increase in protective activities across the country.

By early 1944, therefore operations to organise a secret army in Norway had been adapted in response to the possible consequences of the country's peripheral and subordinate position in relation to the wider strategic context in Europe. Political changes, the improvement in relations with Milorg, also meant that the basis of this clandestine army had begun to change. At the same time, however, conditions within Norway, the nature of the occupying regime and its attempts to break up any form of resistance, meant that SOE was forced to adopt measures to ensure that a secret army was protected, especially as it became increasingly likely that it would be required to make a significant contribution to the country's liberation.

¹⁰¹ For example see details of Operations Martin and Osprey in, Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 341-343. NHM: Operation Instructions for Martin, 20 March 1943, in SOE archive, boks 43, mappe 40/1/6. Details on Operation Osprey, in SOE archive, boks 27, mappe, 19/1/3, 19/4/1, and 19/2/2.

¹⁰² PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44', attached to a memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943 in HS2/218.

¹⁰³ NHM: Operation Instructions for Sandpiper, 2 December 1943, in SOE archive, boks, 24, mappe 18/1/5. Operation Instructions for Merlin, 8 February 1944, boks 29, mappe 20.2/1/2.

III

Rat Work in Norway: Internal Preservation

During the first half of 1942, several of SOE's operations in Norway were broken up through the efforts of informers or police agents with major consequences for the local population and Milorg groups. This threat had to be curtailed; otherwise any effort to organise and prepare a secret army would ultimately fail. Consequently, from the summer of 1942 several SOE teams were instructed to assassinate or prepare the way for the execution of informers and German and Norwegian Nazi police officials.¹⁰⁴ These began as defensive measure and a response to conditions in Norway. But during the final two years of the occupation, in order to ensure that resistance groups would be in a position to make a direct military contribute to the liberation, these became offensive operations and part of a co-ordinated 'campaign' that was instigated across Europe. Owing to its position on the strategic and geographical margins the contribution of a secret army to Norway's liberation was, however, particularly significant, and therefore as the final stages of the occupation approached its preservation became increasingly important. Assassinations were, therefore, not just a response to the brutality of the regime in occupied Norway, but also a reflection of the military importance placed on the role of indigenous forces in a country that stood outside the main theatre of Allied operations in Europe.

Liquidations during the occupation, the authorised killing of Norwegian citizens are naturally a very sensitive moral, legal, and constitutional issue. Nevertheless, they have only received significant academic attention in Norway in recent years.¹⁰⁵ This thesis will, however, concentrate on the link between assassinations and the particular strategic and political conditions that ultimately meant that although relatively small in number, these operations were in Norway an important collaborative military effort involving SOE, Norwegian government, its military authorities, and Milorg.

The threat to SOE/FO and Milorg activities in Norway came from the German and Norwegian Nazi police and military organisations that were set up in the country from the summer of 1940. In 1939 the criminal police (*Kripo*), the *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Gestapo), which together made up the German security police and the

¹⁰⁴ An assassination within this context was a secret execution to remove someone who was seen as a threat to the local resistance or SOE. Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 17-18.

¹⁰⁵ See: Introduction, p. 20.

Sicherheitsdienst, the Nazi intelligence organisation (SD) were merged into one office in Germany under the leadership of Reinhard Heydrich, *Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD* (Sipo u. SD). Moves to transfer this structure to Norway began almost immediately after its occupation. In June 1940 all the German police in the country were placed under the authority of Frederick Wilhelm Rediess, whilst Sipo u. SD (henceforth *Sipo*), housed at Victoria Terrasse in Oslo, was under Lieutenant-Colonel Heinrich Fehlis. *Sipo* was made up of six departments, including *Abteilung IV*, the Gestapo, which led the offensive against the resistance organisations and SOE in Norway. It was also divided into several sections; the most significant of which was *Referat IVN*. This was responsible for the department's intelligence network in Norway, which consisted of employed Norwegian agents, usually those that had Nazi sympathies such as members of NS, or criminals who saw this as an easy way to get hold of money, cigarettes, or alcohol.¹⁰⁶ Over four thousand Norwegians were eventually sentenced for being denouncers or spies, and at the liberation the Gestapo had 312 registered Norwegian agents each with their own cover name. Amongst these numbers were notorious individuals such as Marino Nilsen, Finn Kaas, Astrid Dollis, Ivar Grande, and most famously Henry Rinnan, who created a huge network of informers in Trøndelag and western Norway that was a constant threat to both SOE and Milorg.¹⁰⁷ It was not, however, just the Gestapo that posed a danger to SOE and resistance groups. There was also the *Abwehr*, Germany's military intelligence organisation, which up until the summer of 1944 also had a permanent establishment in Norway. It was responsible for operational intelligence against enemy forces, sabotage behind enemy lines, the prevention of enemy espionage and the protection of German military forces.¹⁰⁸

Prior to 25 September 1940, however, whilst negotiations continued between the German Reichskommissar and the Presidential Board of the Norwegian Storting over future constitutional government in Norway, the German police were 'deliberately and openly', held back. The change in the political climate after 25 September, however, the ending of negotiations and the move to Nazify the country and all its institutions, combined with increasing resistance to this move, meant that

¹⁰⁶ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 105-127. Nøkleby, 'Nyordning', vol. II, in Skodvin (ed.), *Norge i Krig*, pp. 45-80. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 180-184.

¹⁰⁷ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 124. Moland *Over grensen?* pp. 41-42, 209-226.

¹⁰⁸ Pryser, *Hitlers Hemmelige Agenter*, pp. 19-56.

from this point the German security police were given a free rein.¹⁰⁹ In July 1941 the Norwegian *Statspoliti* (Stapo), state police was also established. All of its employees, with the exception of four, consisted of NS members,¹¹⁰ and under the leadership of General Karl A. Marthinsen, it worked closely with *Sipo* in order to protect the occupying regime in Norway. The invasion of the Soviet Union and Allied raids against Norway during 1941 also made the German and Norwegian police and security forces increasingly sensitive to any form of resistance. The Germans were not prepared to tolerate unrest in the occupied countries, including Norway, particularly as their military situation worsened. Perhaps the best illustration of this is the 'Commando Order' signed by Hitler on 18 October 1942, which stated that any commandos, agents, or saboteurs that were captured should be handed over to the *Sipo* and shot.¹¹¹ A combination of political and military factors therefore resulted in a police and security network in Norway that would make future clandestine operations extremely precarious. The imprisonment of 40,000 Norwegians and the execution of 369 during the occupation are an indication of the lengths that the German and NS authorities were prepared to go to stifle any opposition.¹¹²

With the exception of Malcolm Munthe's last minute and improvised attempt to organise the assassination of Heinrich Himmler in Oslo in early 1941,¹¹³ SOE interest in liquidations does not appear to have re-emerged again until the spring of 1942, by which time Operation Cockfight was fully underway. In May a local resistance group established by SOE in southern Norway through its agent Odd Starheim ('Cheese') was badly hit by the Gestapo.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, it was decided that 'instructions' should be issued 'to the effect that Norwegian informants and traitors may be put out of the way by our bands'. At the same time the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief, major general Hansteen requested that this directive be sent to the 'secret army' (Milorg).¹¹⁵ Therefore, by the summer of 1942, both SOE and FO had decided that they must actively protect the Home Front from the threat posed by

¹⁰⁹ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 117.

¹¹⁰ A. Moland, *Over grensen?* p. 45.

¹¹¹ Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 118-119, 168-169.

¹¹² J. Andenæs, *Det vanskelige oppgjøret*, p. 63.

¹¹³ Munthe, *How Sweet is War*, pp. 145-148.

¹¹⁴ NHM: report by Gunvald Tomstad, 19 April 1943, in SOE archive, boks 25, mappe 18/3/1.

¹¹⁵ NHM: 'Consolidated Progress report of S Section', week ending 12 May 1942, in SOE archive, boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b.

‘denouncers and traitors’.¹¹⁶ This suggests that assassinations did not start out as predetermined offensive against the German security police but a defensive response to the difficult conditions in Norway. Moreover, as both SOE and FO shared and were committed to the same long-term objective of creating and preserving a clandestine army in Norway, collaboration on this issue, although potentially controversial and risky, was never as problematic as other matters such as sabotage.

Whether ‘instructions’ were ever sent in the spring of 1942 is unclear but probably in response to these local difficulties, SOE decided to take appropriate action. Operation Swan, a team of two, was sent to the area around Kristiansand in southern Norway in August primarily to establish a W/T link and to provide arms instruction for guerrilla groups in the area. It was, however, also required to train small teams in the ‘best means of disposing of dangerous denouncers by assassination’, although no acts would be undertaken until approval had been obtained from Allied HQ in London.¹¹⁷ This operation plagued by local difficulties achieved very little, and soon afterwards and rather ironically the activities of the Gestapo broke up clandestine activity in the area and resulted in the arrest and brutal execution of several leading local figures from Milorg.¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, between the summers of 1942 and 1943 a further five of the eighteen SOE operations that were sent to Norway to help organise guerrilla units were also instructed to train local groups to carry out assassinations or were given authority to undertake such acts themselves.¹¹⁹ This was the beginning of a joint effort led by SOE and FO together, and eventually including Milorg, and illustrates how seriously all parties took the threat from informers and the nazi police organisations.

The first of these operations in October 1942, ‘Bittern’, proved to be contentious. The party, supplemented by thirty grams of cocaine, included the ex-criminal Johannes Andersen better known as *Gulosten* (yellow cheese), who had assassinated an *Abwehr* agent before fleeing to Britain. Moreover, due to confusion over its role, the behaviour of members of the party and because the Home Front was

¹¹⁶ NHM: ‘Operation Instructions for Bittern’, in SOE archive, boks14, mappe 13/1/4.

¹¹⁷ PRO: ‘Operation Instructions for Swan’, 13 August 1942, in HS2/176.

¹¹⁸ PRO: telegram from ‘Swan’, ref. nr66/srl 862, 11 December 1942, in HS2/176. NHM: ‘MI5 report on Rolf Ellingsen’, 10 April 1943, and ‘Report from Swan’, 19 February 1943, in SOE archive, boks 25, mappe 18/3/4, & 18/3/7 respectively. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 171.

¹¹⁹ The operations were: ‘Bittern’, ‘Grouse’, ‘Gannet’, ‘Chaffinch’, and ‘Thrush’. For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’, pp. 334-359.

not informed of the operation beforehand, it turned out to be a fiasco.¹²⁰ This caused difficulty for the Norwegian government both internally and in its relations with the civilian resistance leadership, and for these reasons it has received considerable attention from previous historians.¹²¹ ‘Bittern’ was, however, primarily a Norwegian operation and the use of such potentially controversial means indicates that not only SOE but also FO were prepared to make every military effort to ensure that the development of a secret army in Norway could continue.¹²²

The difficulties with ‘Bittern’ also did not deter SOE and FO in their future efforts to deal with ‘denouncers’ or undermine future collaboration with SL. In the Gudbrandsdal and Østerdal, the two valleys running northwest from Oslo, the ‘Gannet’ team continued to carry out its instructions to make ready ‘Saccharine Squads’, small teams especially trained in silent killing.¹²³ The ‘Chaffinch’ team, which parachuted into southern Norway in early January 1943, was also ordered to prepare a local team of three men to use the ‘special devices’ intended for use on Quislings. Furthermore, the view within Milorg, which had taken up the issue of informers as early as the summer of 1941,¹²⁴ was according to Tor Stenersen, the leader of ‘Chaffinch’, that ‘something effective should be done’ although ‘preferably by men from the UK’. Consequently, SL was anxious to deal with denouncers, although they wanted them to be taken silently and their bodies to disappear without trace, as this would reduce the risk of reprisals. And it was eventually willing to contribute to these operations. The result was the so-called ‘X-Groups’, teams of six men trained especially for the purpose of disposing of informers. They were organised by SL, instructed by the ‘Chaffinch’ team, and before they were used the necessary permission had to be obtained from the UK, but through Milorg.¹²⁵ Initially this joint effort appears to have had little impact, but it shows that the commitment to

¹²⁰ PRO: memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to E (unknown), ref. SN/1417, 24 September 1942. ‘Précis: Bittern Operation’, 3 February 1943, both in HS2/200. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 104-106.

¹²¹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 33-34, 36-37.

¹²² PRO: letter from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen) in Stockholm, ref. N258, 17 November 1942, in HS2/200. NHM: ‘Report from Jacob Schive on the Majavatn Affair and Bittern’, 9 February 1943, in FO IV archive, boks 78.

¹²³ NHM: ‘Gannet: Short Preliminary Survey of Situation in Anvil Area’, February 1943, from SN/A (Capt. P. F. S Douglas) to SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), 19 March 1943, in SOE archive, boks 40, mappe 23/3/1.

¹²⁴ Moland, *Over grensen?* p. 56.

¹²⁵ NHM: Operation Instructions for Chaffinch, Part II, November 1942, in SOE archive, boks 20, mappe 14.2/1/3. ‘Report from Chaffinch Group’, from Karl Iversen (Tor Stenersen) to FO, 3 June 1943, in SOE archive, boks 21, mappe 14.2/3/1. PRO: ‘Report Concerning “Liquidating” Groups’,

prepare and undertake assassinations was by 1943 based on a shared view both in London and Oslo that the threat posed by informers and the Nazi police forces had to be counteracted.¹²⁶

Liquidations were therefore initially a defensive response by SOE, FO, and Milorg to the difficult conditions they faced in occupied Norway. They were also on the whole part of a co-ordinated and planned military effort and therefore were not random, uncontrolled, and indiscriminate acts of revenge, which perhaps explains why there were relatively few in comparison to other occupied countries.¹²⁷ As the final stages of the war in Europe approached, however, assassinations became an offensive weapon that was used to help ensure the integrity of resistance organisations in the important period in the run up to liberation. In June 1943, SOE's Norwegian Section announced it would take part in a 'general plan of campaign', a series of co-ordinated operations against Gestapo officers and informers. The initial failure of 'local means', however, meant that for Norway 'specially trained agents' would be 'sent in from the UK to carry out the actual work of execution'.¹²⁸ The result was Operation Rat Week, which was launched in November and marked the commencement of a synchronised offensive against informers across parts of occupied Europe. At least three NIC (1) teams, 'Goldfinch' in Oslo, 'Goshawke' in the Gudbrandsdal, and 'Redwing' in Bergen, were assigned to take part in this joint action. They were instructed to wait for a message, '*Dei som skulle vekia – mot de som skulle siga*' (those that shall give way – against those that shall win), which would signal that 'Ratweek' should begin. It was eventually broadcast over the BBC on 6 December 1943 at 18.00 hrs. Although owing to local concerns 'Goshawke' and 'Redwing' did not take part in this 'campaign', on 8 December 'Goldfinch' undertook

from 2/Lieutenant Tor Stenersen, to FO 4, 23 August 1943, in HS2/243.

¹²⁶ Five assassinations were carried out during the first half of 1943 in Norway, but none involved SOE or groups trained by it. They were carried out by the Communist 'Osvald' group and unknown individuals. See: Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 108-112.

¹²⁷ For example there were around 350 assassinations in Denmark compared with less than 100 in Norway. Arnfinn Moland argues that the fundamental reason was the differences in the nature of the occupation and the development of resistance between Denmark and Norway. See: Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 46, 326-328.

¹²⁸ PRO: paper entitled, 'SOE Outline Plan for Joint Activities in Norway 1943/44', attached to a memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. SN/1202, 26 June 1943 in HS2/218.

the first assassination by a SOE group in Norway. It was the first of four executions carried out by this team in the Oslo area over the next four months.¹²⁹

Although 'Rat Week' was a SOE offensive, Milorg was, nevertheless, still involved and therefore assassinations remained a joint effort. The 'Goldfinch' party was instructed to 'proceed to contact SL in Oslo to arrange for Rat Week', and it was Milorg that would provide the names of those to be liquidated. The training of the 'X-Groups' in collaboration with Milorg was also not abandoned, and during the autumn of 1943 three 'killing-squads' and four 'shadow-squads' were prepared. These eventually attempted to liquidate six named informers, although without success.¹³⁰ At the conference held in Stockholm in March 1944 between members of FO and Milorg, it was also agreed that 'certain military actions against the occupying power and its tools', a euphemism for attacks against the Gestapo, should be instituted.¹³¹ As a result a request was sent to London asking for support, which in April resulted in the arrival of Operation Buzzard in Norway to 'provide help' in 'executing denouncers'.¹³²

It became increasingly important to defend the resistance in Norway in the run up to the liberation. In September 1944, SHAEF accepted that Milorg had to be safeguarded so that it could act as a protective force during the early stages of the country's liberation, and therefore it was agreed that action against Gestapo agents should continue.¹³³ By December the execution of collaborators was top of a list of targets given to Gunnar Sønsteby, leader of the NIC (1) teams and link with Milorg in the Oslo area.¹³⁴ Consequently, the number of assassinations of informers and senior

¹²⁹ These were Miss Elsa Kristoffersen, Yngvar Løvdok, Richard Jensen, and Harald Falchenberg. NHM: Operation Instructions for 'Goldfinch', 6 October 1943, in FO IV archive, boks 77. Redwing Operation Instructions, 7 September 1943, in SOE archive, boks 29, mappe, 20.2/1/8. Goshawk Operation Instructions, 10 September 1943, in SOE archive, boks 39, mappe 23/1/3. 'Rapport fra Goshawk til Major Douglas *angående* (concerning) Rat Week' in SOE archive, boks 40, mappe 23/4/2. PRO: 'Short Review of Goldfinch Work', from H.14 (Martin Olsen), Goldfinch leader, to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson and Lt. Col. Øen, 1 June 1944, in HS2/243. E. Jensen [*et al*], *Kompani Linge*, vol. II, p. 149. Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 69, 114-123.

¹³⁰ NHM: report by acting 2/Lieut. Per Berg (B. Fjelstad), 11 May 1944, in SOE archive, boks 25, mappe 18/3/3. FO IV (SPA), skuff 2, boks 54, 24 February 1944, Goldfinch, "Oversikt fra 1/12-43 til 21/2-44", cited in A. Moland, *Over grensen?* p. 72.

¹³¹ PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944', (translation), 14 April 1944, in HS2/233.

¹³² NHM: Operation Instructions for Buzzard, (undated) and memo from SX (Major Jens Henrik Nordlie) to SOE, 30 March 1944, in FO IV archive, boks 19, mappe 11-C-4. NHM, Mi IV (SPA), skuff I, mp 104, cited in Moland, *Over grensen?* p. 71.

¹³³ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, in HS2/234. Hauge, *Rapport om mitt arbeid under okkupasjonen*, p. 186.

¹³⁴ PRO: paper entitled, 'Targets which are Released for Attack', in HS2/204.

Nazi police officials, carried out by both SOE and Milorg groups, grew during 1944 and 1945. The 'Buzzard' team supported by members from other SOE groups working in the Oslo area undertook several executions during this period.¹³⁵ In Trondheim, SOE made several attempts during 1943 and 1944 to liquidate Henry Rinnan, whose network of informers had done so much damage to resistance groups in the area,¹³⁶ although without success.¹³⁷ In Bergen, SOE's 'Razorbill' team linked up with a local Communist group that in November 1944 assassinated two local police officials.¹³⁸ In Ålesund on the west coast, a local Milorg group assassinated Ivar Grande, Henry Rinnan's second-in command, after orders had been received from London via a W/T link provided by SOE's 'Antrum' operation.¹³⁹ From the beginning of 1944 and up until the German capitulation in May 1945, SOE undertook or were in some way involved in at least eighteen assassinations in Norway, whilst Milorg carried out even more.¹⁴⁰ There was therefore a co-ordinated, determined and joint effort to protect Norwegian resistance as the liberation approached. This is perhaps best exemplified by the assassination of major general Karl Marthinsen, head of the Norwegian *Stapo*, in February 1945. He had been listed as a legitimate target in London, the 'Buzzard' team carried out the action, and although the attack resulted in the execution of twenty-eight people, it received the unequivocal support of the Norwegian government.¹⁴¹

¹³⁵ NHM: letter from Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, to Edgar Nielsen in Stockholm, ref. N. 632, 14 November 1943, in SOE archive, boks 19, mappe 14.1/5/1. PRO: telegram from 'Goldfinch', srl C2419/15, 26 April 1944, in HS2/192. 'Short Review of Goldfinch Work', from H.14 (Martin Olsen) to Lt. Cols. Wilson and Øen, 1 June 1944, in HS2/243.

¹³⁶ Rinnan had created an organisation called Sonderabteilung 'Lola', which employed between sixty and seventy Norwegians and which by the end of the war was responsible for around eighty deaths. See: Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 253, 254, 327.

¹³⁷ For details of operations 'Wagtail' and 'Robin' see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 342-345. PRO: Operation Instructions to Bjarne Hagen (J. Pevik), 6 September 1943, and letter from 8627 (Nielsen) SOE Stockholm to Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, SOE HQ, ref. N472, 16 September 1943, in HS2/212. NHM: report by 2/Lt. A.H. Pevik, 4 November 1944, and paper entitled 'Robin', July 1945 in SOE archive, boks 35a, mappe 22/3/7. Moland *Over grensen?* pp. 214-215.

¹³⁸ NHM: 'General reports – Operations', Oct-Dec 1944, in SOE archive, boks 30, mappe 20.2/3/5. E. Jensen, [*et al*], *Kompani Linge*, vol. II, p. 166.

¹³⁹ PRO: telegram to Antrum Yellow, 29 October 1944, telegram from Antrum Grey, 30 October 1944, telegram from Antrum Grey, 16 December 1945, all in HS2/144.

¹⁴⁰ A. Moland, *Over grensen?* pp. 71 & 73.

¹⁴¹ NHM: memo from SX (Major Jens Henrik Nordlie) to D/S (Lt. Colonel J.S. Wilson) 17 February 1945, in FO IV archive, boks 19, mappe 11-C-4 and 11-C-2. PRO: letter from Lt. Col. H.N. Sporborg to C.F.A. Warner (Foreign Office), ref. HN8/1717, 28 February 1945, in HS2/234. A. Moland, *Over Grensen?* pp. 165-168.

Operations that included instructions to undertake assassinations or train local groups in assassination were part of an effort to protect the long-term military project of organising a secret army, although they were initially a response to conditions within the country and therefore defensive. As the final stages of the war approached, however, wider strategic considerations came into play and they therefore took on a more offensive nature in Norway to ensure that the preparation of the resistance for its role in the liberation could continue unchecked. Unlike sabotage, which remained a difficult issue through to 1944, assassinations also had the support of the Norwegian military authorities and Milorg and were therefore controlled, planned, and considered a legitimate military tool to be used in defence of Norwegian interests, in this case the preservation of the Home Forces.

Conclusion

SOE operations were the result of a range of factors. The immediate objective of attacking economic and military targets and the longer-term aim of organising a secret army had strategic origins. The requirement to work with the Norwegian military authorities and Milorg, however, meant that some aspects of policy had to be tailored in order to meet their concerns. The outcome of these operations was also influenced by a further, additional component: the conditions within occupied Norway, both physical and political. Many teams never reached their target, and many objectives had to be attacked several times in order to have any significant long-term impact. Even Operation Gunnerside, so often held up as SOE's greatest success, had only a small effect on the production of heavy water. The impact of the work of the German and Norwegian Nazi police organisations in occupied Norway with their extensive use of informers, meant that SOE operations were constantly infiltrated and broken up. Consequently, resistance groups had to be regularly rebuilt and direct action taken against denouncers through assassination.

Local operational difficulties, political factors, the nature of its occupation, and lastly and most significantly Norway's contribution within the wider strategic context all combined to shape SOE operations. By the end of 1943, however, it was the impending Allied invasion of northwest Europe and its potential impact on Norway that increasingly began to impose its influence on all SOE activity in this theatre.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOE AND THE LIBERATION OF NORWAY 1944-1945: OPERATIONS IN THE SHADOW OF OVERLORD

Introduction

The nature and scale of SOE's operations in Norway changed significantly in the months leading up to the German capitulation in May 1945. This was firstly the result of a very different strategic background, which from the spring of 1944 was dominated by Allied operations in northwest Europe. By the summer Norway was firmly entrenched in the shadow of events on the mainland of Europe, which meant it remained sidelined and isolated. Consequently, uncertainty continued over its eventual liberation, especially whilst over 300,000 German military and civilian personnel remained in the country. Alongside this, with the end of the war in Europe in sight, post-war considerations also became significant. Norway's future economic prosperity and the transition to lawful, constitutional government therefore became additional factors that had an important impact on the make-up of special operations in the country during the final year of its occupation.

SOE sabotage operations had been an element of a British attritional strategy that set out to help undermine the enemy's fighting strength and prepare the way for major land operations on the Continent that would complete the defeat of Germany. Therefore, once Operation Overlord commenced it would have been natural for this type of operation in Norway to become redundant. This was not the case. As the first part of this chapter will show, from the summer of 1944 the contribution of sabotage changed and instead of preparing the way for Overlord it became directly supportive to Allied operations on the Continent. Anything considered of immediate importance in sustaining German resistance or a potential threat to the Allied campaign became a target, including the units of the 20th Mountain army that began to withdraw from Norway in the autumn of 1944.

Nevertheless, as the second section of this chapter will show, within the different context of the final months of the occupation, long-term activity, preparations for the liberation, became the priority. From September 1944, SHAEF decided that precedence should be given to arming, equipping, preparing, and preserving resistance groups as a local force for protection and law and order during

the potentially uncertain period after a collapse of German authority either centrally or in Norway, and before the arrival of regular troops from the Continent. Consequently, through SFHQ, in collaboration with FO and Milorg, a major effort was made to prepare the resistance, put in place a huge array of operations designed to protect industrial and economic sites from destruction, and help facilitate a peaceful transfer of power back to the Norwegian authorities. It was therefore only in the final stages of the war in Europe, and as a consequence of a combination of Norway's position in relation to the culmination of Allied strategy and post-war considerations, that the preparation of a secret army in Norway really gathered pace.

Notwithstanding the importance of the strategic background, political factors also had a particular significance during the final months of the occupation. Relations between SOE and the Norwegian authorities had by this stage become extremely close and the leadership of Milorg looked to FO for direction. The visits of Jens Chr. Hauge to London also reflected its adherence to co-operation with SOE and through it the Allied High Command. All parties were committed to the shared aim of assisting Norway's liberation and therefore SOE operations in 1944 and 1945 were built on a solid collaborative basis. Furthermore, events within Norway, the emergence and growing authority of *Hjemmefrontens ledelse*, the Home Front leadership, preparations for the approaching liberation, German backdoor efforts to conscript young Norwegians, and the actions of Communist groups, all contributed to a decision to allow the direct involvement of Milorg units in sabotage. This resulted in a major intensification in attacks against economic and military targets during the final months of the occupation. Nevertheless, the outcome of all these activities, especially preparations for the liberation, continued to be plagued by local and logistical difficulties and therefore despite a huge increase in the flow of resources to this theatre from the autumn of 1944, a fully armed, trained, and prepared secret army was never created in Norway. The country's marginal position ultimately meant that the whole process was left too late.

Nonetheless, in May 1945 Germany capitulated and over the following months there was a gradual return to legitimate government in Norway. The final section of this chapter will show that despite the difficulties, SOE alongside FO helped Milorg to play a significant although largely symbolic role in ensuring that this was a peaceful and largely uneventful process.

I

SOE Sabotage Operations in Norway 1944-1945: A Tactical and Collaborative Offensive

After the successful launch of Overlord, sabotage in Norway changed from being strategic *coup de main* strikes against economic and military sites, to tactical operations in support of the Allied campaign on the Continent. This meant that attacks against targets, such as the Orkla pyrite mines near Trondheim, were eventually replaced by actions against objectives such as fuel, armaments, and the German divisions that began to retreat through Norway, all of which were considered of 'immediate' and 'present value to the enemy'.¹ The amount of sabotage also increased significantly due to the decision by the resistance leadership in Norway to allow units of Milorg to participate in operations against targets of military importance. Attacks undertaken by teams sent in from Britain were replaced by attacks carried out by local teams, either NIC (1) or Milorg units alone or in collaboration. This is what SOE had intended from the beginning: sabotage carried out by locally led and organised groups controlled from the UK. It only happened, however, when conditions within Norway permitted.

During the first half of 1944, in the run up to Overlord, SOE sabotage activity in Norway was sparse. At least four *coup de main* operations using teams from Britain were planned, but only one, 'Feather II' against the locomotives at the Orkla pyrite mines, was eventually undertaken. By the end of September 1944, when operations 'Dodworth' and 'Docklow' against the Orkla and Sulitjelma mines respectively were terminated, SOE attacks prepared and instigated from outside Norway were brought to an end.² The view within the Allied High Command was that a 'premature sabotage campaign in Norway' was 'more likely to hinder than help their general D-Day plans'.³ Consequently, SOE's support for 'Fortitude North' was restricted to minor activities such as maintaining the frequency of journeys to the Norwegian coast and increasing W/T traffic, and because of a fear of reprisals and

¹ PRO: 'Outline Plan for joint SOE/SO-FO IV activities in Norway from August 1944', from DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), 31 July 1944, in HS2/235.

² It has been claimed that 'Feather II' in April 1944 was the last SOE *coup de main* operation planned outside Norway. Operations 'Dodworth' and 'Docklow' were both prepared in London and Stockholm in August 1944. See: NHM: SOE archive, boks 36, mappe 22/4/1 and 22/4/2, operations 'Docklow' and 'Dodworth'. Appendix D, 'SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway 1940-1944', pp. 323-327. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 223.

³ PRO: letter from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen) ref. N.16, 23 January 1944, in HS2/128.

potential damage to Milorg it was decided not to escalate sabotage.⁴ It therefore appears that there was a growing realisation that the resistance in Norway would probably be required to make an important contribution to the liberation and therefore had to be kept intact and not prematurely sacrificed in a sabotage campaign that might achieve very little. There was an appreciation that conditions in Norway, especially the ‘extent of enemy control’, meant that a major increase in activity could be extremely hazardous.⁵

From May 1944, however, as part of the Home Front struggle against plans to conscript young Norwegians for military service on the eastern front, Milorg units carried out attacks against the registration offices of the *Arbeidstjeneste* (Labour Services) around Oslo.⁶ Therefore, events within Norway and the resultant stepping up of resistance to the actions of the occupying regime were the trigger that ultimately led to an increase in sabotage. This was at a time when the resistance leadership believed that the Norwegian people wished ‘to play a part in the fight against the enemy’, and would ‘endure the sacrifices entailed by military actions on the part of the Home organisations’.⁷ This was significant, not just because it marked the end of a policy of largely non-violent resistance in Norway, but also because it marked the beginning of widespread collaboration between SL and SOE groups on sabotage operations, especially around Oslo. Gunnar Sønsteby had been SOE’s pre-eminent agent in the capital since the spring of 1942. He had also developed links with SL and built up a network of contacts, including the many NIC (1) teams that were by that time working in the locality.⁸ In mid May 1944, Jens Chr. Hauge asked for Sønsteby’s assistance in the fight against conscription,⁹ which led to direct SOE involvement in the attacks against the Labour Services. It was this that also gave rise to the formation of what was referred to as the ‘Oslo Detachment’; a group made up

⁴ PRO: extracts from Plan ‘Fortitude’, (SHAEF [44] 13), 23 February 1944, and ‘Plan Fortitude’, ref. MUS/709/2/411, 1 April 1944, including ‘SOE/SO Directive to Scandinavian Region’, in HS2/1.

⁵ PRO: letter from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen) ref. N.16, 23 January 1944, in HS2/128.

⁶ On the night of 4-5 May 1944, Milorg teams attacked the offices of the Labour Services in Oslo, Skien, Ulefoss, Hønefoss and Sarpsborg, and abortive attacks took place at Holmestrand and Stavanger. See: PRO: paper entitled, ‘A.T. Mobilisation in Norway’, attached to minutes of the 30th meeting of the ANCC, 8 June 1944, in HS2/138. Moland, *Kampen mot mobiliserings-trusselen i Norge 1943-1944*, pp. 21-22.

⁷ PRO: ‘Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944’, (translation), 14 April 1944, in HS2/233.

⁸ NHM: ‘Interrogation of Capt. Gunnar Sønsteby’, 2 July 1945, in SOE archive, boks 16, mappe 13/3/6. G. Sønsteby, (i samarbeid med J. B. Gundersen), *Bak rapportene*, (Oslo: Aventura Forlag, 1985), pp. 140-208.

⁹ G. Sønsteby, *Bak rapportene*, p. 152.

from SOE agents operating in the area.¹⁰ This unit became officially attached to SL with Sønsteby as its sabotage leader¹¹ and over the following months it carried out at least thirty-five successful attacks against major industrial and military targets around Oslo,¹² sometimes assisted by members of Milorg. From this point, therefore, sabotage in Norway, particularly in the south, was a joint effort involving NIC (1) teams and Milorg units.¹³

The direct involvement of the Home Forces meant that during the final year of Norway's occupation, even though SHAEF gave it a lower priority than preparations for the liberation,¹⁴ sabotage increased significantly. The number of attacks carried out against economic and military targets in Norway by NIC 1 teams and Milorg units between the early summer of 1944 and May 1945 was considerably greater than the total number of *coup de main* operations carried out during the previous four years. One official Norwegian report cites at least seventy cases of sabotage against industrial plant in Norway during 1944 alone,¹⁵ whilst another report, the result of an insurance investigation of war damage between July 1944 and spring 1945 that excludes railways and actions by the 'Oslo Detachment', lists at least 140 cases of possible sabotage.¹⁶ Another estimate based on the traces that can be found in original documents, and which includes railway and shipping sabotage alongside

¹⁰ Before May 1944, although the various NIC (1) teams around Oslo knew of each other's presence, there was no special contact or co-operation. From 18 and 19 May and during the summer, members from these teams worked together under Sønsteby, carrying out sabotage actions aimed at scuppering efforts to mobilise young Norwegians. The 'Oslo Detachment' eventually included members of the 'Curlew', 'Company', 'Puffin', 'Buzzard', 'Bundle', 'Goldfinch' and 'Turkey' teams. See: NHM: report from 24 (Sønsteby), typed on 20 September 1944, in FO IV archive, boks 13, mappe 9-C-2. SOE archive, boks 16, mappe 13/3/6, the 'Oslo Group'. Moland, *Kampen mot mobiliserings-trusselen i Norge 1943-1944*, p. 21.

¹¹ PRO: memo from SU, (Bjarne Øen) to DS, (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), headed 'Directive to no 24', 6 December 1944, in HS2/204.

¹² Lt. Colonel J.S. Wilson was in Norway in June and July 1945, met members of the Oslo Detachment and visited many of the sites that they had attacked. PRO; 'Diary of Scandinavian Tour' by J.S. Wilson OBE, in HS9/1605/3.

¹³ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's mappe 10/8/1, Appendix J, 'Local Acts of Sabotage'. Berg & Lindhjem, *Militer motstand i Rogaland og Vestfold*, pp. 90-95. T. A. Barstad, *Sabotasjen i Oslo området*, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1975), pp. 40-42.

¹⁴ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. Mus/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, in HS2/234.

¹⁵ The Communists group working around Oslo caused some of the damage listed. NHM: paper entitled, 'Damage done by sabotage to industrial plants in 1944' from the Norwegian Economic Intelligence Office, ref. Jnr. U.D. 10567/45, 16 April 1945, in FO IV archive, boks 14, mappe 9-C-3, 'Sabotasje Oversikt'.

¹⁶ NHM: document entitled 'Undersøkelse vedr. Sabotasjeskader', 20 July 1945, in FO IV archive, boks 14, mappe 9-C-3.

attacks against economic and military targets, puts the total at between 350 and 400 acts of sabotage during the final months of the occupation.¹⁷

From the spring of 1941, SOE had hoped to develop a sabotage organisation within Norway, but the objection of the Norwegian authorities based partly on Milorg's fears that local involvement in such activities would threaten its long-term existence precluded this. It is, therefore, somewhat ironic that in the summer 1944, when Milorg was for the first time prepared to become directly involved in military operations, SHAEF was reluctant to allow the resistance in Norway to be active.¹⁸ It was, however, in response to events in Norway that the policy of the resistance leadership changed, not wider strategic or military requirements. This meant that from the summer of 1944, despite SHAEF's hesitation, Milorg groups carried out a series of operations against targets across southern Norway where many important industrial sites and military stores were concentrated. In Milorg's District 13, in and around Oslo, a separate action group called *Aks 13000* was set up under the District Leader. It had a military structure, with a staff, a 'Head of Actions', and sabotage teams that were responsible for reconnaissance of the objective through to the actual operation. During the final eight months of the occupation between 300 and 400 men from D13 were involved in operations against industrial and military sites around the capital.¹⁹

There was not just an increase in the amount of sabotage in Norway from the spring of 1944; the nature of the targets also changed. From early July after the successful completion of Operation Neptune, the assault phase of 'Overlord', NIC (1) personnel, assisted by Milorg and with permission from London, attacked chemical factories in Oslo that produced sulphuric acid, a key component in the production of both explosives and more significantly U-boat batteries.²⁰ Also in July, SFHQ decided that 'petrol and oil' were 'targets of greatest importance and should be attacked whenever possible'.²¹ Consequently, over the following months at least twenty-eight operations were undertaken against oil and petrol stores and several

¹⁷ Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. verdenskrig*, p. 28.

¹⁸ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. Mus/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, in HS2/234.

¹⁹ Barstad, *Sabotasjen i Oslo området*, pp. 38-45.

²⁰ NHM: 'Report from 24 (Gunnar Sønsteby), 20 September 1944, in FO IV archive, boks 13, mappe 9-C-2. Report on the 'Operation against the Verpen Svovelsyrefabrikk', 16 August 1944, in SOE archive, boks 19, mappe 14.1/5/1.

²¹ NHM: telegram to 'Firecrest', ref. srl c4232, no. 20, 26 July 1944, in SOE archive, boks 20, mappe 14.2/2/3.

hundred thousand litres were destroyed through actions by Milorg groups and NIC (1) teams either alone or in collaboration.²² Operations against U-boat fuel and the power supply to the shipyards in Bergen, including yet again the Laksevaag floating dock, were yet another part of the Allied effort to end the potential threat posed by the U-boats stationed in Norway.²³ Further important targets attacked by NIC (1) teams, particularly the 'Oslo Detachment' under Sønsteby and local Milorg groups, included aircraft parts, arms and ammunition production, mechanical workshops, the remaining stocks of ball-bearings in Norway,²⁴ and finally shipping. SHAEF continued to place a high priority on attacks against enemy vessels and Operation Bundle, local Milorg units, and Communist groups taken together had some success, eventually sinking or badly damaging at least twelve ships in the Oslo harbour area as well as undertaking attacks in Bergen, Horten, Porsgrunn and Moss harbours during the final months of the occupation.²⁵ The intention behind all these actions was to give direct and immediate support to the Allied campaigns against Germany. It is, however, very difficult to assess their overall military contribution within the broader context. They undoubtedly led to a significant amount of destruction of vital materials, as exemplified by oil and petrol, at a time when Germany could least afford it, and at little cost to the Allies. They were also symbolically significant, as this was the first time that SOE and Milorg had worked together on operations that made an immediate and direct military contribution to the war in Europe. It has also been claimed that they were a further complicating factor for the German occupation of Norway, and had a positive impact on the morale of both the civilian population and Milorg.²⁶

It was important, however, that as the objective of these sabotage operations was to support the Allied offensive across Europe, they were co-ordinated and directed against appropriate military targets by SFHQ and FO IV in close liaison with SHAEF. The improvement in W/T contact with Milorg from the autumn of 1943, which was extended during the spring of 1944 when several new clandestine radio stations began operating in the Oslo area, was crucial to this.²⁷ Milorg also

²² NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's mappe 10/8/1, Appendix J, 'Oil and Petrol Sabotage'.

²³ Ibid. NHM: 'General Reports'- operations, in SOE archive, boks 30, mappe 20.2/3/5. Lambert, 'Seizing the Initiative', in Rodgers (ed.), *Naval Power in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 151-152.

²⁴ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's mappe 10/8/1, Appendix J, 'Local Acts of Sabotage'.

²⁵ Ibid. Barstad, *Sabotasjen i Oslo området*, pp. 92-93, 96. Barstad, *Pelle-gruppa: Sabotører på Østlandet*, p. 105.

²⁶ Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. verdenskrig*, p. 29.

²⁷ When Knut Haugland returned to Norway in November 1943, one of his tasks was to improve communication between SL and the UK. By spring 1944, SL had two stations, 'Barbette Red' and

contributed to this joint effort by separating out those industries that were of immediate importance to the German war effort and suitable for sabotage from those that were less significant but important to post-war Norway and therefore should remain untouched. This information was passed to London via Stockholm and resulted in a paper that was sent back to the Norwegian capital in June, and which became the basis for industrial sabotage over the coming months. Targets were, however, only attacked after they had been released or authority had been obtained through FO in London, either directly by the Milorg districts or more often by its leadership.²⁸ Even if an objective of high priority was selected, if an operation could lead to reprisals against Milorg or the local population, prior approval had to be sought from London.²⁹ The excellent working relationship between SOE, FO and Milorg was therefore a crucial factor in ensuring that sabotage in Norway was used as an extensive and effective tactical weapon in the final offensive against Germany, without resulting in political difficulties with the Norwegian government and unnecessary damage to the country's post-war economy.

Finally, there was one other category of sabotage that became widespread during the final months of Norway's occupation. This was railway sabotage. As shown, during 1943 and early 1944 SOE sent four operations to Norway in readiness to sabotage the main railway routes in the event of a German withdrawal or to support a possible Allied invasion.³⁰ In the run-up to Overlord, however, and during the summer and early autumn of 1944 these teams remained idle as SHAEF continued to fear that unrestricted attacks against the railway network would threaten the long-term integrity of Milorg and could lead to widespread famine amongst the civilian population. After the success of the preliminary stage of Overlord, it also preferred to allow German forces to leave Norway.³¹ Nevertheless, SOE believed that it could and would eventually be called on to make a contribution to slowing down German withdrawals by attacking the railway network in Norway. Therefore, it continued

'Corncrake' in contact with the UK and from this point communication continued unhindered. For example by March 1945, SL had three W/T stations working for them in the Oslo area: 'Chiffchaff', 'Crossbill Red', and 'Coppersmith Blue'. See: NHM: 'Report on the Wireless Service Between SL and the UK and in the Districts 11-16 and 24 & 25 from the autumn of 1943 to April 1944', by Lt. K. Haugland in SOE archive, boks 22, mappe 15/3/1.

²⁸ Barstad, *Sabotasjen i Oslo området*, pp. 97-101.

²⁹ NHM: telegram to 'Firecrest', ref. srl c4232, no. 20, 26 July 1944 in SOE archive, boks 20, mappe 14.2/2/3. Telegram to Chiffchaff, nr B 1412, 28 July 1944, in boks 15, mappe 13/2/9.

³⁰ See chapter seven, p. 235.

³¹ See Chapter two pp. 80-81.

with its preparations and in September and October 1944, operations ‘Woodlark’ and the main ‘Woodpecker’ party were also sent to the country to prepare attacks against the railways both north and south of Trondheim. By late October 1944, when a ‘limited’ number of attacks against the railways was permitted,³² there were therefore five NIC (1) teams resident in Norway or just across the border in Sweden in various states of readiness. It was, however, only from early December 1944 and owing to concerns over the arrival of units of the 20th Mountain army on the Continent that these teams were given permission to undertake unlimited action and a widespread offensive began.³³ From this point until April 1945 a sabotage campaign that included NIC (1) teams, Milorg units, a team from the Norwegian Parachute Company (Operation Waxwing), an OSS team (Operation Rype), and plans to use the Special Air Services (SAS), was launched against the Norwegian rail network in an attempt to delay and disrupt the withdrawal of German forces from Norway.³⁴

This offensive resulted in probably close to one hundred actions against the railway routes that were used to transport German troops southwards.³⁵ These included the destruction of small sections of rail line, the demolition of bridges, and larger scale attacks such as Operation ‘*Betongblanding*’ (Concrete Mixer) on 14 March 1945, which was the largest co-ordinated sabotage action in Norway and involved 1000 men from Milorg attacking the railway lines on both sides of Oslo fjord.³⁶ Despite some initial reluctance within SHAEF to use Milorg, this was therefore a major collaborative tactical effort.³⁷

Notwithstanding the scale of railway sabotage in Norway during 1945, there is, however, doubt over its effectiveness. In July 1945, in response to a request from

³² PRO: memo from SFHQ, (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman) to G-3 Division, SHAEF, ref. MUS/2301/1/2036, 18 October 1944 and telegram from SHAEF to Scottish Command, 26 October 1944, ref. SHAEF/17240/4/ops (c) in WO219/2380.

³³ See chapter two, p. 82. For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Miscellaneous and Long-term Operations in Norway’, pp. 342-348.

³⁴ For details of SOE operations see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway, 1940-1945’, pp. 342-356. Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, pp. 24-27.

³⁵ According to Arnfinn Moland the Norwegian State Railway’s (NSB) war history records over 70 different attacks against the Norwegian railway between October 1944 and May 1945. The central management’s security office, however, recorded 89 cases of sabotage in 1945 alone. This probably includes actions by Communist groups but is nevertheless a much higher and probably more reliable total than in SOE archives. NHM: paper entitled ‘Actions against German controlled Norwegian State Railways’, in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/21. Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, p. 25.

³⁶ Ibid. Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, p. 26.

³⁷ PRO: ‘Appreciation – on the action which can be taken to interfere with the movement of German forces throughout and out of Norway’, ref. MUS/2301/1/2312, 10 January 1945, in HS2/235.

the COS, G-3 Division of SHAEF produced a 'Report on the Value of SOE Operations in the Supreme Commander's Sphere'. This rather self-congratulatory paper made the claim that the impact of railway sabotage in Norway was 'striking' and led to a reduction in the rate of withdrawal from Norway from 'four divisions to less than one division per month'. It is a claim that was repeated after the war in British publications but has justifiably been treated with some scepticism in more recent Norwegian histories.³⁸ From the summer of 1942 until April 1944 there was relatively little change in the number of enemy forces in Norway, which despite the rotation of troops in and out of the country remained fairly static at around eleven to thirteen divisions.³⁹ The Germans, however, withdrew at least nine complete divisions from Norway between July 1944 and May 1945, including the major part of those units chosen to return to the Continent as part of Operation Nordlicht, the retreat from Finland, as well as other manpower, such as 11,000 men from the Luftwaffe.⁴⁰ There was, therefore, an uninterrupted flow of enemy forces out of the country after the launch of Overlord, which actually accelerated despite the instigation of extensive railway sabotage. The destruction of rail line and the demolition of bridges in the area north of Trondheim had little impact on the movement of German forces as new routes were found, motorised transportation used, or temporary bridges quickly erected. Even most of the damage caused by Operation *Betongblanding* in March was repaired within a few hours.⁴¹ This sabotage was nevertheless an additional major

³⁸ PRO: 'Report on the value of SOE Operations in the Supreme Commander's sphere', ref. 370.2-5 ops (2), from SHAEF G-3 Division to the COS, July 1945, cited in WO219/40B. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 671. Sir C. Gubbins, 'Resistance Movements in the War', *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute*, vol. 93, 1948. Kraglund & Moland, 'Hjemmefront', vol. 6, in Skodvin, *Norge i Krig*, p. 236.

³⁹ Using the OKW war diaries, K. J. Muller shows that the equivalent of 11-13 German divisions were stationed in Norway during this period although divisions were replaced as worn out divisions from the eastern front were sent to Norway for recuperation. Muller, 'A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations in the Second World War', pp. 318-321.

⁴⁰ In July 1944, the 196th Infantry Division was pulled out followed in the autumn by the 269th Infantry Division, the 560th Volks-Grenadier Division, and the 710th Infantry Division. The 6th SS-Berg Division was withdrawn during late December 1944 and early January 1945, the first 'Nordlicht' division to leave the country, followed by the 2nd Berg Division, the 163rd Infantry Division, the 169th Infantry Division, 199th Infantry Division, and lastly the 7th Berg Division, which was not transported out of the country before the war ended. It is also important to point out that several thousand troops were also sent to Norway during the final months of its occupation. For details see: Solhjell & Traphagen, *Fra krig til fred*, pp. 194-195.

⁴¹ The most serious single action against the Norwegian railways was the blowing up of Jørstad Bridge on 13 January 1945, which resulted in the death of seventy-seven German soldiers. Nevertheless, despite the destruction of the bridge it only delayed troop transport for a few days. Initially troops went on foot, but after just six days a temporary bridge was completed, which railway traffic used until a new and permanent bridge was built. See: Solhjell & Traphagen, *Fra krig til fred*, pp. 120-122, 196. Moland, *Sabotasje i Norge under 2. Verdenskrig*, pp. 24-27.

security and logistical problem for the occupying regime in Norway during the final months of the war. At the time it was estimated that at least 2000 German troops were used as 'line guards' in an attempt to protect the rail network.⁴² German withdrawals did begin to slow down in the spring of 1945, but other factors such as the mining of Norwegian waters, lack of shipping and coal, and Allied air superiority, were probably the major causes behind this.⁴³

Although railway sabotage did not have the impact that SOE claimed, it nevertheless does illustrate how Norway's relationship to the wider strategic background was crucial in determining the nature of special operations in the country during the final months of the war in Europe. Strategic factors were, however, alone not enough to lead to the major increase in sabotage that occurred at this time. Changes in the nature of the occupation and preparations for the liberation led to an important modification in policy by the Home Front that allowed Milorg units to become actively involved in sabotage, assisting SOE teams and carrying out their own actions. It was, therefore, a mix of strategic and political influences specific to the final stages of the war in Europe and the occupation of Norway that led to not only a change in the make-up but also an intensification of SOE sabotage from the summer of 1944.

II

SOE and the Liberation: the Preparation of a Protective Force

From the summer of 1944 SFHQ, in collaboration with FO and under the authority of SHAEF, also began a major effort to prepare both Milorg and SOE sponsored groups to act as a protective force that could be utilised within Norway during the early stages of its liberation. Preparations were predominately built on an expectation that the most likely scenario was that the German forces would eventually capitulate, despite some fears that there might be an enemy withdrawal or even a last stand in the country. Consequently, after four frustrating years, and within the particular strategic conditions of 1944, SOE's plans to prepare a secret army in Norway came to fruition. This underground army would not, however, be used as a guerrilla force to support an opposed landing by Allied troops, as originally intended, but to assist in the peaceful

⁴² PRO: 'Monthly SOE/SO 'Reports, nos. 13-20, Oct 1944 – May 1945', no. 17, 10 February 1945 in WO219/90.

⁴³ Solhjell & Traphagen, *Fra krig til fred*, pp. 196-197.

transition to lawful government in Norway. Therefore, its role was ultimately purely political.

The major effort that was put in to creating a viable clandestine military force in Norway during 1944 and 1945 also remained a joint endeavour based on a shared belief that it would be required to make a significant contribution to the liberation. Scotco espoused the contribution of resistance forces, particularly in light of the shortage of regular troops for operations in Norway, and therefore liaised closely with SFHQ. SOE's Norwegian Section and FO IV jointly oversaw and helped to prepare this underground army. By this stage Milorg had over 30,000 men under its control, a military staff structure spread across the regions of Norway, an internal communications network, and a leadership that looked to London and ultimately the Allied High Command for direction and authority.⁴⁴

This background led to a huge array of operations in Norway during 1944 and 1945 that were designed to ensure that a clandestine army was in a position to make an effective contribution to the liberation of the country from German occupation. There was an acceleration and increase in the supply of arms, equipment, and training. Teams of officers were sent in from Britain in an effort to improve local leadership and measures were taken to ensure that resistance groups remained intact and undiminished. Milorg in collaboration with SFHQ and FO initiated a huge array of counter-scorch measures. Arrangements were put in place to ensure close liaison between SFHQ/FO, Scotco, Milorg, and the Norwegian Police Battalions in Sweden, along with measures to facilitate the rapid deployment of forward parties to the key areas of Norway immediately after a German surrender. The objectives were to ensure protection of key industrial sites and communications, maintain law and order, and prepare the way for the arrival of the main contingent of Allied forces that would ultimately enforce the armistice conditions. In addition, in response to the retreat of German forces into northern Norway in October 1944 and the implementation of a brutal scorched-earth policy, SFHQ responded to requests for help from the Norwegian government and agreed to prepare local resistance groups in this remote region, although with little success.

From the autumn of 1944, the supply of materials to Norway increased significantly and nearly three-quarters of all arms and equipment delivered by air was

⁴⁴ See chapter three, pp. 138-141.

dropped during the final nine months of the occupation.⁴⁵ Between September 1944 and May 1945, the RAF and USAAF undertook a notable but costly effort to distribute these supplies and twenty three British and six American planes were lost on dropping operations over Norway.⁴⁶ This alone indicates that there was a determination within SHAEF to ensure that the Home Forces in Norway were adequately prepared. At the same time, however, the number of recruits in Milorg also increased, especially during the final months of the occupation when it grew from a little over 30,000 to around 40,000,⁴⁷ and therefore, by May 1945, despite Allied efforts, it was still not fully armed. In Milorg's District 21, in the county of Møre and Romsdal on the west coast south of Trondheim, of the 1500 men mobilised in May 1945 only between seven and eight hundred had weapons. In District 17, in the county of Telemark west of Oslo, only 1764 men out of a total of 3151 mobilised in May 1945 were armed, despite receiving fourteen successful drops during the final months of the occupation. The leadership of District 25, close to Lillehammer north of Oslo, also complained after the war of a general shortage of arms and equipment.⁴⁸ During 1944 and 1945, there was also an increase in the number of NIC (1) teams that went into Norway to help prepare local resistance groups, mostly from Milorg. Nevertheless, the proportion of those that eventually received instruction was patchy. In eastern Norway, where Milorg was at its strongest, only seventy-five percent received military training despite the arrival of fifty instructors from Britain. And in the area around Trondheim only fifty percent of Milorg recruits were trained.

In late April and early May 1945, however, there were several clashes between German patrols and armed groups from two of the reception camps, 'Bjørn West' near Bergen and 'Elg' northwest of Oslo, which had been set up in the mountains to receive and train members of the Home Forces in preparation for the liberation. Unlike the local groups the Germans suffered heavy casualties during these encounters,⁴⁹ which appears to indicate that the training and preparation of the

⁴⁵ For details see chapter one, p. 52-53.

⁴⁶ Egner & Aasland, *BBC: Kanonen spiller Chopin*, p. 18.

⁴⁷ PRO: 'The Military Home Front. Survey par December 1st 1944', compiled by FO IV, in HS2/230. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, p. 229. Moland, 'Norway', in Moore, *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 230.

⁴⁸ PRO: transcription of notes taken by SN (P), Lt. Cdr. Sir George Pollock, during a visit to Norway during June and July 1945, in HS2/213. Birkenes, *Milorg i D 17: Nedre Telemark*, p. 210.

⁴⁹ Jensen, [et al], *Kompani Linge*, vol. II, pp. 304, 324-331.

resistance was having some effect and that in small and isolated confrontations with occupying troops they were capable of acting as an effective military force. Nevertheless, whilst visiting Norway at the end of the occupation, Lt. Colonel Wilson wrote in his diary that it was fortunate for 'Bjørn West' that 'the end came so soon after the action'.⁵⁰ In other words he felt it was unlikely that the resistance could have withstood the full force of German power for very long if it had ever been brought to bear against them. Although a late but significant effort was made by the Allies to prepare a secret army in Norway, at the time of the German surrender the '40,000 Milorg personnel' were certainly not fully equipped and trained. The difficulties of transporting materials to Norway in the winter months and of operating in an occupied country meant that the whole process could not be completed within the short time frame that was available. It is, therefore, difficult to see how this clandestine army, without prompt support from regular forces, could have ever defended the country from a determined German effort to instigate a wide-spread scorched-earth campaign, let alone a last stand, if either had ever been carried out.⁵¹

Nevertheless, with resources deployed elsewhere, the Allies realised that they had to rely heavily on the contribution of the Home Forces in the early stages of the liberation. A further indication of this was the huge effort that was put in to ensuring that this underground army would be able to communicate both internally and externally so that its contribution could be effectively co-ordinated and closely managed. As with any army, command and control is essential and this requires not only having the necessary equipment but also a sufficient quantity in the right place at the right time. By 8 May there were sixty-nine clandestine wireless stations operating in the country, compared with only two in 1941, and during 1945 over 4000 messages were sent from Norway, over fifty percent of the total sent during the war. From early 1944 attempts were also made to set up an internal radio network so that local Milorg organisations could communicate within their area, across districts, and with SL in Oslo. By May 1945, through using radio sets assembled in Norway under the code-name 'Olga' as well as equipment brought into the country, twelve districts were able to intercommunicate. In addition about 100 SCR/ 195 'walkie-talkie' sets were also

⁵⁰ PRO: 'Diary of a Scandinavian Tour', by Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson, in HS9/1402/6

⁵¹ According to Arnfinn Moland by the spring of 1945 the Milorg men were 'equipped, trained and well disciplined' and 'prepared for the worst alternative, a German last stand in Norway'. Moland, 'Milorg and SOE', in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, p. 149. Moland, 'Norway' in Moore (ed.), *Resistance in Western Europe*, p. 230.

sent to the country to aid communication in 'battlefield conditions'.⁵² The effort to ensure effective communication during the liberation was therefore much more successful.

An army, secret or otherwise, also has to have a competent leadership. By the early summer of 1944 both SFHQ and FO had recognised that there was a shortage of trained officers within Norway, something that was confirmed by Milorg soon afterwards.⁵³ It was therefore decided to send in specialist teams to link up with and where possible reinforce the Milorg district leadership. This eventually happened in two ways. Firstly, through Operation Farnborough, which set out to send specialist teams largely made up of recruits from *Den norske krigs-skolen*, the Norwegian War School in London, to eastern Norway, especially in and around Oslo where Milorg was at its strongest. The objective was to increase 'the preparedness of the district' through supplying teams of officers and NCOs. And between the end of December 1944 and mid February 1945, nine out of a total of ten such operations were sent to Norway.⁵⁴ Secondly, in the outlying Milorg districts, NIC (1) teams were progressively authorised when possible to link up with and provide support for the local resistance leadership. For example, in early November 1944 Operation Auk arrived in the Hugesund area between Bergen and Stavanger. The leader of the team was instructed to take over responsibility for SOE groups already there, re-organise the district, and become military adviser to the Milorg District Leader. In mid February 1945, Operation Diver was sent to the Milorg District 21, around Ålesund on the West Coast, also to act as military adviser to the District Leader.⁵⁵ During the final months of the occupation, therefore, Milorg became the unequivocal basis for a clandestine army in southern Norway, and a major effort was put in to ensuring it was

⁵² NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson's file, Appendix M, 'Radio Communications – General Survey' and Appendix I, 'Wireless Stations in Norway'.

⁵³ In July the concept of reinforcing the District Leaders in Norway was approved by the ANCC and at the meeting in August J. Chr. Hauge stated that there was a definite shortage of suitable leaders in Norway. PRO: minutes of the 31st and 32nd meetings of the ANCC on 20 July and 17 August 1944 respectively in HS2/138.

⁵⁴ The 'Farnborough' operations commenced with 'Farnborough I' when second lieutenant Johan Møller Neerland was dropped into eastern Norway on 28/29 December 1944. Farnborough IV was never sent and Operation Chacewater eventually replaced it. Fourteen men were recruited from *Den norske krigs-skolen* in London and especially trained for the 'Farnborough' operations. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 350-358. NHM: 'Farnborough Operational Instructions' in SOE archive, boks 1, mappe 10/1/2. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 10-11 & 21-35.

⁵⁵ For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 348 & 353.

an effectively led military force. Nevertheless, there were areas where the organisation remained weak and ineffectual, such as around Sogne north of Bergen, where SOE and FO retained responsibility for organising local groups. By this stage, however, SOE, owing to a number of 'favourable' reports from the field, appears to have lost any reservations it had about the reliability of Milorg.⁵⁶

Preparing, arming and equipping a clandestine army in Norway in readiness for the liberation was on its own not enough. This underground force had to be kept intact and its numbers preserved and if possible increased if it was ever to make a viable military contribution. Conditions within Norway during the final twelve months of the occupation made this increasingly difficult. As shown the threat to Milorg from the German and Norwegian security police using informers and provocateurs continued and even intensified as the liberation approached and therefore the number of liquidations undertaken by SOE and Milorg groups increased.⁵⁷ A further hazard to this clandestine army was also the attempt, using the cover of the Labour Services, to conscript young Norwegians for German military service, thereby denying the resistance both new and current recruits and thus weakening its ranks. In response to this both SL and FO in collaboration with SFHQ decided to set up reception camps or cells in the woods and mountains where young men could hide and receive training and weapons instruction.

Although the series of cells that Milorg set up in the woods across eastern Norway during the summer of 1944 were a refuge for significant number, almost 3000 around Oslo, they nonetheless proved difficult to maintain. Owing to a lack of provisions many of the men, over 1500, were forced to flee to Sweden, whilst others found local jobs or returned home. Some cells, however, particularly those close to and even across the Swedish border, were kept going through the winter of 1944-1945. Supplies of clothes and food, along with a few weapons, were brought over from Sweden during the autumn of 1944 by so-called 'Planet Groups' established by the Norwegian authorities in Stockholm. Arms and equipment were also dropped by

⁵⁶ NHM: 'Operation Instructions for Siskin', 11 October 1944, in SOE archive, boks 31, mappe 20.3/1/1. 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', 1-31 May 1944, in SOE archive, Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. Jensen, [et al], *Kompani Linge*, vol. II, pp. 94-106.

⁵⁷ See chapter seven, pp. 254.

air and NIC (1) officers carried out instruction, but the total effort in men and materials was relatively small.⁵⁸

From as early as March 1943, SOE had also contemplated setting up a small number of secret bases in Norway.⁵⁹ And during the winter of 1943-1944, FO also began to consider the idea of establishing a series of camps in the mountains where young men could be trained. Consequently, in May 1944 instructions were given to plan several large 'bases' or 'reception centres' in isolated locations where Milorg recruits could not only escape the threat of mobilisation but also be formed into armed and trained guerrilla units that could be used during the liberation if required. The project was provisionally approved by SHAEF in July 1944⁶⁰ and at the end of August preparations commenced for the first base called 'Elg' situated in the lower Valdres valley about 100 kilometres northwest of Oslo.⁶¹ The intention was to establish five camps across southern Norway but despite the efforts through OSS to obtain supplies of Arctic equipment from the USA, only three of these bases, 'Bjørn West' north of Bergen, 'Varg' east of Stavanger, and 'Elg', received enough material to be able to grow their numbers. Nonetheless, even 'Bjørn West', the largest of these reception centres, was only able to send 250 fully armed men into Bergen on the evening of 9 May 1945 to help maintain order after the German surrender.⁶² Even with the huge increase in the supply of arms and equipment to Norway during the final months of the occupation, it was not enough to sustain even small groups in hiding in the harsh northern climate for any significant period.

⁵⁸ Milorg District 11 set up four cells in the woods, and one of them called 'Fritjof' was located across the Swedish border. Moland, *Kampen mot mobiliserings trusselen i Norge 1943-1944*, pp. 19-20 & 22-23. Barstad, 'Norsk motstand fra Svensk grunn', in Ekman & Grimnes (eds.), *Brøderfolk i ufredstid*, pp. 272-276. Birkenes, *Milorg i D17*, pp. 171-200. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, p. 23.

⁵⁹ PRO: paper entitled 'Chiefs of Staff Directive to SOE for 1943', attached to a note from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to D/Plans, 30 March 1943, in HS8/330.

⁶⁰ NHM: 'Bjørn West Reports' in SOE archive, boks 30, mappe 20.2/3/4.

⁶¹ NHM: 'Golden Eagle Operation Instructions', 28 August 1944, in SOE archive, boks 20, mappe 14.2/1/1, and mappe 14.2/2/2, 'Golden Eagle Telegrams'.

⁶² The five bases were: 'Varg' – Settesdal, east of Stavanger; 'Elg', Hallingdal, northwest of Oslo; 'Orm', Hedmark, 180 kilometres northeast of Oslo, 'Hjørt' northeast of Trondheim, and 'Bjørn West' north of Bergen. Because of its size, 'Bjørn West' was divided in two, 'Bjørn West' and 'East', and in December 1944 a party was dispatched to establish a second base on the eastern side of the area. Very little was, however, achieved with few supplies received and only a small force put together. NHM: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/2987, 21 September 1944 in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/20. 'Bjørn West Reports' in boks 30, mappe 20.2/3/4. 'Bjørn East Reports' in FO IV archive, boks 125. PRO: HS7/175 – Norwegian Section History – Appendix 'N', 'Formation of Milorg Bases'. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 345-358.

The frenetic effort to prepare a clandestine army in Norway during the final six months of the country's occupation had the full support and co-operation of the Norwegian government. The manpower in Milorg symbolised its main military contribution to the liberation and therefore its preparation and utilisation was politically very important. Conditions within occupied Norway, however, continued to limit what was achievable. Nevertheless, the country's marginal position, both strategically and geographically, meant that local manpower had to be utilised, particularly in an effort to protect the country from the potentially destructive impact of a German scorched-earth policy. Moreover, as the final stages of the war in Europe approached post-war considerations, the safeguarding of the Norwegian economy and industrial infrastructure from long-term and costly damage became increasingly important.

From December 1943 and during the following spring NIC (1) teams continued to go into occupied Norway with instructions to prepare local groups to protect key industrial sites.⁶³ In the spring of 1944 the Norwegian military authorities and Milorg leadership also affirmed that 'preventive' measures needed to be prepared in advance,⁶⁴ a view that was reinforced in July when intelligence was received from MI IV in Stockholm that indicated that the Germans might attempt to destroy industrial sites, communications, harbours, and ship-works at the end of their occupation. Looking to the future, the Norwegian government clearly had a strong political motive to protect its country's economic base and therefore became fully engaged in the planning, preparation, and implementation of counter-scorch operations. Consequently, from the spring of 1944, Leif Tronstad and Peter Deinboll in FO IV, who both had valuable local experience, began preparations for the protection of Norwegian industries and communications. And during his visit to London in July/August 1944, J. Chr. Hauge attended the meeting of the ANCC where all parties agreed to the importance of protective operations.⁶⁵ There was therefore pressure from SOE, FO, and Milorg to increase counter-scorch measures in Norway and from the beginning of September, after instruction from SFHQ, it became the

⁶³ For details see chapter seven, p. 246. Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway', pp. 343-358.

⁶⁴ PRO: 'Report from a Conference in Stockholm in March 1944' (translation), 14 April 1944 in HS2/233.

⁶⁵ PRO: 'Minutes of the thirty-second meeting of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee', 17 August 1944 in HS2/138. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 6-10.

primary task for the Home Forces. FO provided expertise, SOE and FO jointly supplied specialist teams, arms, equipment and training, whilst Milorg provided the bulk of the men that would undertake these preventive measures. They were therefore collaborative operations and representative of the close co-operation between SOE, Norwegian authorities, and Milorg.⁶⁶ Most importantly, this tri-partite relationship, backed by the authority of the Allied High Command, meant that the number and scale of these operations could increase dramatically over the following months.

From September 1944, built on help provided by OSS office in Paris, and drawing on Allied and resistance experience of German demolitions in France, preparations began for a whole raft of counter-scorch operations in Norway.⁶⁷ The first major collaborative effort of this kind was Operation Sunshine. The party, under the command of Major Leif Tronstad, was parachuted into Norway in October 1944. Its objective was to protect the power stations in the counties of Telemark and Buskerud, as well as the Norsk Hydro industrial plants in Rjukan and Notodden. Divided into three sections, 'Moonlight', 'Starlight', and 'Lamplight', it included many of the men from operations 'Grouse' and 'Gunnerside' who would eventually work closely on the project with both the local Milorg organisation and SL in Oslo. This operation is important, not just because of its objective, but also because of what it symbolises. The hydroelectric plants in Norway and the production of heavy water had been major strategic targets for SOE. From the early autumn of 1944 the priority, because of their economic importance, was to ensure their protection. Consequently, 'Sunshine' was in many ways a watershed that marked the point at which post-war factors became the determining factor in shaping operations against major industrial targets in Norway.⁶⁸ The aim was no longer to destroy these sites, but to stop them being destroyed.

During October and November 1944, FO, Milorg, represented by Jens Chr. Hauge, SFHQ, Scotco and MEW also put together three major protective plans. The

⁶⁶ PRO: 'Directive on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944, in HS2/234.

⁶⁷ In July 1944 J. H. Reimers from FO IV was given responsibility for counter-scorch preparations. In September 1944 he was sent to France where Colonel Temple from OSS office in Paris assisted him. He was introduced to leaders in the French resistance who took him to see examples of German demolition. See: Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 6-9.

⁶⁸ PRO: files HS2/170 & 171, Operation Sunshine; HS2/156 Operation Moonlight; HS2/168 & 169, Operation Starlight. NHM: 'Ekspedisjonen 'Sunshine' Personell' in SOE archive, boks 23b, mappe 16/5/1. 'Starlight', 'Lamplight', 'Moonlight' rapporteur in FO IV archive, boks 93. Poulsson, *Aksjon Vemork*, pp. 113-140. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 13-21. For details see Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', p. 347.

first of these was the 'Foscott Plan', which set out to protect the priority targets in Norway, the power supply and telecommunications network. Altogether 118 sites, including thirty-four power stations and twenty-seven transformer stations, were identified. In addition, local Milorg groups would protect sixty-one secondary targets that were identified as part of the 'Carmarthen' plan, whilst the '*Bedriftsorganisasjon*' (B.org), the industrial organisation, a resistance group based on factory workers under the control of SL, would protect many smaller targets under the 'Catterick' plan.⁶⁹

To implement the 'Foscott' plan the 'Farnborough' teams provided expertise and worked with local Milorg organisations to protect key sites in eastern Norway. In addition, as with Operation Sunshine, other sites across the country were allocated to teams either sent from Britain, such as 'Clothall' and 'Crowfield', or to NIC (1) teams that were already resident in Norway, such as 'Arquebus' or 'Razorbill'. Many of these teams also worked in collaboration with local Milorg groups. Finally, there were operations such as 'Barming' that for various reasons never reached Norway and in these cases it was Milorg or other local groups that stepped in to help. SOE and FO, in co-operation with Milorg, put together at least forty operations in the final nine months of the war that set out to help protect Norway's power stations, industries, and telecommunications network. It was a major collaborative effort and is a further illustration of the import role allocated to clandestine forces in Norway during the liberation.⁷⁰ The improvised and sporadic nature of SOE's earlier activity had been left far behind. These operations were sophisticated, well planned and organised.

There is one other protective plan that because of its scale and military importance to the liberation should also be mentioned. This was 'Polar Bear', an operation that set out to safeguard the main Norwegian harbours from German demolition, something that had happened to the French ports and as a result slowed the Allied advance in the autumn of 1944. It involved FO IV, SOE, and on this occasion it also included help from the Norwegian navy, which supplied the manpower, and the Royal Navy, which organised a trip to Dieppe so that the

⁶⁹ According to Lt. Col. Wilson the 'Foscott' plans were presented to Hauge on his arrival in London in November 1944. The 'Carmarthen' plans, including targets in D.18 and D. 22, were also worked out before Hauge's arrival, which contradicts Eric Welle-Strand. NHM: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen), no. 463, 31 October 1944 and including a list of 'Foscott' and 'Carmarthen' objectives in SOE archive, boks 6, mappe 10/4/4. *Den norske regjeringens virksomhet: fra 9 april til 22 Juni 1945*, vol. IV, *forsvarsdepartementet*, pp. 133-124. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 21-35.

⁷⁰ For details see Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 347-358. NHM: SOE archive, boks 6, mappe 10/4/4, list of 'Foscott' and 'Carmarthen' targets.

Norwegian personnel could study the German destruction at first hand. Between mid January and May 1945 a total of ten 'Polar Bear' teams were eventually sent to Norway to cover a total of fourteen Norwegian harbours from Narvik in the north to Fredrikstad in the east.⁷¹

Despite the explicit priority given to protective operations, however, whilst uncertainty remained over the intention of the German forces in Norway, the idea of using local guerrilla forces in support of Allied military operations to re-occupy the country was not completely abandoned. It seems that SOE still believed it needed to continue to prepare for all possibilities, no matter how unlikely. Therefore, some of the NIC (1) teams that went into the country during the final months of the occupation, such as 'Snowflake', 'Avocet', and 'Diver', still received instructions to prepare local groups to undertake guerrilla operations in support of Allied forces, if this proved to be necessary. For example, Operation Diver, which arrived in Norway as late as mid February 1945 to work in the Ålesund area, was instructed to plan actions to assist the 'Allies in the event of an invasion'.⁷² Such instructions, however, were by this stage not widespread and seem to have been confined to teams operating in areas where Milorg was traditionally weaker, especially along the west coast. There also appears to be no evidence that they were directly linked to a last minute expectation or fear that the German forces in Norway might make a last-stand, and probably represented no more than a continuation of earlier work.

During the final months of the occupation the bulk of SOE's operations reflected the view that Allied military success in Europe would ultimately lead to a collapse or surrender of German authority in Norway. It was, however, important for post-war political stability if the return to legitimate, civilian government could happen in a peaceful and orderly environment. In September 1944, therefore, SFHQ had directed that the Home Forces should work closely with the civilian resistance in Norway to help establish and maintain law and order prior to the arrival of a relief

⁷¹ The planning for 'Polar Bear' was a joint effort between J. H. Reimers (FO IV), Commander Thore Horve (Norwegian Naval High Command) and Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson from SOE. Horve established a 'Polar Bear' office and began by recruiting sixteen Norwegian naval personnel to be trained to carry out the operations. For details see Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 351-358. NHM: 'Outline of Projected Projects for Norway', ref. DS/SN/2967, from DS (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), 21 September 1944 in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/20. 'Consolidated Progress reports of S Section', no. 32, 1-30 September 1944, in Boks 3a, mappe 10/3/8b. PRO: file HS2/205, 'Polar Bear IV'. *Den norske regjerings virksomhet: fra 9 april til 22 juni 1945*, vol. IV, *forsvarsdepartementet*, p. 124. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 45-51.

⁷² NHM: Operation Instructions for 'Snowflake', 'Avocet', and 'Diver' in SOE archive, boks 31, 27, & 32, mappe 20.3/1/2, 19/1/2, & 21/1/6, respectively.

force,⁷³ a point reinforced in the 'September Directive' that was issued to the Milorg district leadership soon afterwards.⁷⁴ In step with this the Norwegian government in London accorded the Home Front Leadership an important executive role in the transitional period prior to the re-instatement of legal authority in Norway.⁷⁵ Ultimately it was the Home Forces in collaboration with newly appointed local government officials, local police, and the District Commanders (DKs), the Norwegian government representatives responsible for resistance forces once the liberation had commenced, that would help to ensure that this transition was controlled and uneventful.⁷⁶ Alongside this the Norwegian Police Battalions in Sweden, made up from some of the thousands of Norwegian refugees that had fled the country since 1940, would be made ready by the Allied and Swedish authorities to act as an additional local force that could also be quickly deployed in Norway. By May 1945, a total of nearly 11,000 men in units of the *Rikspoliti* (State Police) and *Reservepolitikorps* (Police Reserve Corps) were awaiting a call to return to their homeland.⁷⁷

Recognition that local forces would have to be utilised as part of the military plans for the liberation is also borne out by the efforts that were made to institute close liaison between SFHQ and Scotco and to ensure that when the time came there would be close operational liaison between the Allied land forces in Norway, Milorg and the Police Battalions. Contact between SOE's Norwegian section and Scotco was

⁷³ PRO: 'Direction on the Employment and Development of Resistance in Norway', ref. MUS/2210/1899, 3 September 1944 in HS2/234.

⁷⁴ PRO: 'Directive from the Central Leadership (SL) to the District Leaders (DS) regarding the Norwegian Home Forces (HS), September 1944, in HS2/235.

⁷⁵ On 5 May 1945, the Norwegian Prime Minister issued the following message to HL: 'in the case of a German capitulation the Home Front Leadership is herewith authorised on the Government's behalf, until Government representatives arrive in Oslo, to undertake what is necessary to ensure the establishment and maintenance of Norwegian civil administration on the basis of Norwegian law and agreed resolutions'. See: Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 18-21.

⁷⁶ J. Chr. Hauge (translated by M. Hauge), *The Liberation of Norway*, (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1995), p. 99.

⁷⁷ From early 1942 the Norwegian authorities began to consider military training for the Norwegian refugees in Sweden, but due to difficult relations with the Swedish authorities nothing happened before 1943. During 1943, however, a '*Rikspoliti*' (national police force) including uniformed and criminal police under the Department of Justice, and a '*Reservepolitikorps*' (reserve police corps) under the Norwegian military authorities, were formed, which would lead to 10,000 Norwegian refugees in Sweden receiving military training. By December 1943 the Swedish authorities had given permission for the development of the *Reservepolititi* and in January 1944 training began. By the end of the war a total of 14,300, including camp and administrative personnel, had served in either the *Riks* or *Reservepolititi*. From the autumn of 1944, after the Soviet occupation of part of northern Norway, 2,400 men from both these police units were transferred to northern Sweden and eventually 1300 were transferred to Finnmark to assist in the liberation of the area. See: O. K. Grimnes, *Et flyktninge samfunn vokser fram: Nordmenn i Sverige 1940-1945*, (Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1969), pp. 244-280. Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 14-16 & 37.

formalised in April 1944 when Lt. Colonel C. S. Hampton was appointed as liaison officer between the two. A further step was taken when in the summer of 1944 authority was given for the formation of a 'Special Force Detachment' (referred to as M.E. 12), under Hampton, to ensure direct and close collaboration between SFHQ and Scotco in the planning for the liberation. This led to the formation of a HQ Detachment and five Special Force sections, one for each of the main regions of Norway, which were given the task of working with the Allied forces that would oversee and enforce the liberation. Three Special Force sub-sections were also created to accompany the Police Battalions as they crossed from Sweden into Norway en route for Narvik, Trondheim, and Oslo respectively. The objective of special force units was once in Norway to provide liaison between the Allied forces and local Milorg groups, including SL in Oslo, the DKs once they arrived, and with the Police battalions as they moved into Norway.⁷⁸ At the same time although Milorg would remain under the executive command of its own leaders and the relevant DK, local military commanders would be able to issue orders for their employment through the DK or a representative of SFHQ.⁷⁹

Further evidence of the military significance placed on Milorg and the Police Battalions are the proposals, which originated in early September 1944, to send Allied representatives of SHAEF, through SFHQ, to both Norway and Sweden. There was a belief within Scotco that there was a need to 'advise and assist the Home Front in organising all available forces', to 'co-ordinate action taken within Norway with that undertaken by Allied forces outside', to 'hinder German attempts at wrecking', and to make 'preparations for the speedy arrival of supplies'.⁸⁰ This was given added impetus by fears within SOE's Norwegian section that the impending armistice between Finland and the Soviet Union could result in an early German withdrawal, instigation of a national scorched-earth policy, or maybe even a capitulation, leading to conditions of unrest and disorganisation across Norway. With no military action possible within this theatre at this time it was felt that a great degree of responsibility could therefore fall on the Home Front and SFHQ. This led to the 'Scale' operations,

⁷⁸ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, Wilson's mappe 10/8/1, Appendix P, 'Special Force Detachment, Force 134'.

⁷⁹ PRO: 'Operation Doomsday' – Joint Plan by DCOS, Planning Staff, Commander-in-Chief Rosyth, Military Commander Joint Task Force, 13 Group RAF (Plans), April 1945, in WO106/4401.

⁸⁰ PRO: 'Proposals for a Military Mission', by C.K. Squires (Scottish Command), 28 August 1944 in HS2/215.

which were plans to send Allied representatives to Norway to liaise with local resistance leaders, provide SHAEF with intelligence, and if necessary, receive the surrender of local garrisons and gain German recognition of the role of the Home Front.⁸¹

Initially several missions were planned in order to cover Milorg HQ in Oslo, the region around Trondheim, the county of Nordland centred on Mosjøen, the Stavanger/Kristiansand area, and Bergen, as well as one to work with SOE and OSS missions in Stockholm. The leading operation, called 'Octave', set out to send an Allied team to link up and co-operate with SL to assist it to prepare the Home Forces in Norway, undertake counter scorch operations, hinder German withdrawals if required, and receive the capitulation of German forces if necessary. Although 'Octave' was kept alive at least until the end of 1944, only three operations were eventually sent into the field: 'Quaver' and 'Semi-Quaver' in Nordland, and 'Minim' to Stockholm. The reason for the eventual abandonment of 'Octave' and the missions to Stavanger/Kristiansand and Bergen is unclear. Contact between SFHQ and Milorg HQ in Oslo was during the autumn of 1944 very close, especially after J. Chr. Hauge's visits to London and with the improved W/T links it was probably felt that the mission was no longer necessary. The withdrawal of German forces from Finland also did not have the widespread impact that was feared.⁸²

The first 'Scale' operation to go ahead was 'Quaver', in October 1944. It has attracted previous attention because it was the only SOE operation sent to Norway that primarily used British recruits,⁸³ including a SOE staff officer, J. C. Adamson. Owing to the strategic geography of the area, which made it a potential transportation bottleneck, it was an important locus for gathering intelligence on and for the initiation of operations against the German forces moving southwards. Previous attempts by NIC (1) teams to build up resistance groups further south – Operations Heron and Falcon – had been broken up by the work of the German security police and local informers and Milorg had also failed to build up a significant organisation in the area. Consequently, operations 'Quaver' and 'Semi-Quaver' were a final, and

⁸¹ PRO: paper entitled, 'Scale Missions', 15 September 1944, in HS2/215. NHM: paper entitled, 'Outline of Projected Plans for Norway', from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/2987, 21 September 1944, in SOE archive, boks 5, mappe 10/3/2.

⁸² PRO: paper entitled 'Norway: Provision of SOE/SO Missions', 10 September 1944, in HS2/234. Paper entitled 'Scale Missions', 15 September 1944, in HS2/215.

⁸³ Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 659.

after Adamson's early capture, a failed Allied attempt to establish armed and trained resistance groups in this strategically important region.⁸⁴

The other 'Scale' operation that went ahead was 'Minim', the proposal to send a representative of SFHQ to Stockholm to act as a liaison officer between SHAEF and SOE office, OSS mission, and MI IV. This was more successful. The most important issue for 'Minim' - Major H. A. Nyberg from SOE's Norwegian section - was Operation Beefeater, the training and preparation of the Norwegian Police Battalions. From December 1944, Nyberg, under the cover of 'Honoury Assistant Military Attaché' at the British Legation provided SFHQ and Scotco with regular and up to date information on 'Beefeater'.⁸⁵ 'Minim' is another indication of the value that SHAEF and Scotco placed on the Norwegian Police Battalions in Sweden as a force that could be quickly deployed in Norway in the days immediately after a German capitulation. They were eventually incorporated into Operation Doomsday, the plan to establish forces in southern Norway as soon as the German commander had accepted the Allied terms of surrender. Their military significance is also highlighted by Operation Antipodes, which was approved in February 1945. This was a plan, put together in Stockholm by SOE, FO, and Milorg, to use teams from Britain, Sweden and within Norway to protect the bridges along the vital routes into the country. The objective was to ensure that the advance of the Norwegian police units was not delayed. It only proved possible in the short time-scale available to get eight of the original fourteen 'Antipodes' operations in place, although local Milorg groups in eastern Norway were also used to help secure the numerous bridges that straddle the River Glomma on the routes into Oslo.⁸⁶

Finally, there was one other major event that had an impact on the development of SOE operations in Norway during the final months of the occupation. This was the retreat of the German 20th Mountain Army followed by the advance of

⁸⁴ Other SOE operatives with mixed British/Norwegian parentage were also sent into Norway, such as Percy Armstrong (Operation Sanderling) and Norman Lind (Operation Sunshine). The failure of SOE activity was not down to bad luck, as Mackenzie claims, but the effectiveness of German security forces. See: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945', pp. 331-355. PRO: memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to 8627 (Nielsen), ref. N.448, 22 October 1944, and memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to DPS, ref. DS/SN/3274, 26 October 1944, both in HS2/215. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*, pp. 270-272. Mackenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, p. 659.

⁸⁵ PRO: paper entitled 'Scale Missions: Minim', and 'Minim' reports in HS2/215.

⁸⁶ Altogether 22 Norwegian officers were trained in Britain and 45 in Sweden for this operation, which was planned in Sweden in March 1945 by Lt. Reimers (FO IV), Colonel Ram (SOE), Captain Rolf Eriksen (MI IV) and Ole Berg from Milorg. For details see: Appendix F, 'SOE Long-Term and

Soviet forces into northern Norway in autumn 1944, which led to the forced evacuation by the German authorities of a large part of the local Norwegian population from the northern counties of Finnmark and Nord-Troms and the instigation of a brutal scorched-earth policy.⁸⁷ As a result the Norwegian government turned to its allies, including SOE, for assistance in its effort to make a contribution to what it saw as the liberation of a part of its country and to protect Norwegian interests and citizens in the region.

This resulted in two failed attempts to instigate actions against German forces in the north of Norway through arming and preparing local resistance groups. The first operation was called ‘Husky’, a plan to establish a SFHQ base in Finnmark using Norwegian and British personnel and where selected local recruits could be trained and equipped to carry out actions behind the German lines. The second operation called ‘Scapula’ was an attempt, in response to appeals from SIS station ‘Gudrun’, to supply weapons to local groups, who would then lead efforts to resist the forced evacuation of the civilian population. SOE strongly opposed both operations, primarily as it was felt they had no military value and that there better ways of using scarce resources, but eventually it bowed to political pressure from the Norwegian authorities and agreed to implement them. The remoteness of the area, which made contact extremely difficult, the threat posed by small enemy vessels, and the rejection by SIS operator of the British and Norwegian proposals, meant, however, that both projects were eventually abandoned.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, they illustrate that SOE, despite severe reservations, continued to believe that its commitment to collaboration with the Norwegian authorities was vital.

The first two sections of this chapter have examined SOE’s operations in Norway during the final months prior to the country’s liberation. In the early hours of 7 May 1945, Germany surrendered unconditionally. The last section of this chapter

Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945’. p. 354. NHM: SOE archive, boks 1, mappe 10/1/1, ‘Antipodes’, 23 April 1945. Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, pp. 52-53.

⁸⁷ Between 40 and 45,000 Norwegian citizens were forcibly moved southward. For details see: Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, p. 27. H. Sandvik, *Frigjøringen av Finnmark 1944-1945*, (Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, 1975), p. 42. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 157-236.

⁸⁸ For details see: Appendix F, ‘SOE Long-Term and Miscellaneous Operations 1940-1945’, p. 349. PRO: file HS2/195, Operation Husky. Memo from D/S (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson) to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/3569, 7 December 1944; memo from SN (Lt. Col. J.S. Wilson), to AD/E (Brigadier E.E. Mockler-Ferryman), ref. DS/SN/3675, 21 December 1944; memo from DS to AD/E, ref. DS/SN/3691, 26 December 1944; memo from AD/E to D/S, ref. ADE/3452, 29 December 1944; memo from AD/E to D/S, ref. ADE/4161, 17 January 1941, all in HS2/235. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 212. Pedersen, *Militære motstand i nord 1940-1945*, pp. 142-144.

will therefore move on to examine SOE's contribution, alongside FO and Milorg, to the early stages of Norway's liberation and consider whether these efforts ultimately had any value.

III

The Collapse of German authority and the liberation of Norway May-June 1945: SOE long-term policy is finally implemented

At 02.41 a.m. on 7 May 1945 Germany surrendered unconditionally on all fronts. This was confirmed in a BBC broadcast to Norway at 18.30 p.m. and during the same evening people began to appear on the streets of Oslo to celebrate the end of the war. On the afternoon of 8 May an Allied 'Herald Party', a forward party from Scotco, flew into Oslo with the capitulation dictate, which was presented to the German High Command at Lillehammer later that evening. On 9 May General Böhme, in command of the German forces in Norway, confirmed that he would work loyally to ensure that its terms were carried out.⁸⁹

When the German High Command accepted the Allied terms and conditions of surrender in Norway on 8 May 1945, uncertainty over the route to liberation was at an end. Over the coming weeks and months there was an orderly and largely uneventful German capitulation.⁹⁰ According to General Thorne, C-in-C Allied Land Forces Norway, the smoothness of the early stages of the liberation was the result of 'the good discipline of Milorg and of the German Command'.⁹¹ Whilst the view of Jens Chr. Hauge was that it was primarily because of the 'brilliant German staff work' and the 'unbelievable discipline of the Germans' rather than Allied efforts.⁹² On 8 May, however, there was still the potential for chaos and disruption within the country, especially in the period before the arrival of an Allied force to oversee the

⁸⁹ The BBC broadcast was not totally clear as it stated that it was 'thought' that the German surrender included 'German forces in Norway'. It is also worth noting that the Soviet Union insisted on a second German surrender in Berlin on 8 May. The 'Herald' party, under Brigadier R. Hilton, landed in Oslo at 16.30 p.m. and presented the surrender terms to the German High Command at Lillehammer at 23.30 p.m. on the same day. At 00.00hrs on 9 May 1945 a complete and unconditional German surrender came into effect. See: Hauge, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 108-109. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, p. 270. Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, p. 35.

⁹⁰ There were some small and sporadic disturbances, particularly in northern Norway, and there was considerable tension in Bergen, but these were isolated incidents. See: Pedersen, *Militære motstand i nord*, pp. 172-175. Mann, *British Policy*, p. 345.

⁹¹ PRO: 'Abstract of General Thorne's letter to General Bedell-Smith' (Chief of Staff to General D.D. Eisenhower), 27 May 1945 in WO106/1987.

⁹² Hauge, *Frigjøringen*, p. 146.

surrender. Close to 400,000 Germans remained in the country, including many of the war weary divisions that had fought in Finland before retreating into Norway in the autumn of 1944. It is within this context that the contribution of clandestine forces in Norway should be assessed.

In this potentially unstable situation it was important that all the plans that SFHQ, FO IV, and Milorg had put together over the previous months to protect Norwegian industry and communications, ensure law and order, and to assist a prompt return to civil authority in Norway, were rapidly set in motion. Alongside this the framework that had been created to ensure that once the Allied forces arrived in Norway they could effectively co-ordinate their work with the local resistance leadership across the country, had to be put in place.

In the days prior to 8 May everything was done to avoid any clashes between the Home Forces and German units that might threaten an orderly capitulation. To assist this objective on 7 May the Home Front leadership, using contacts that had been developed earlier, began discussions with the German High Command in order to prevent any possible misunderstanding or disagreements. From the autumn of 1944, SL was in touch with two officers, Frithjof Hammersen and Joachim Von Moltke in the Wehrmacht High Command. When Hauge visited London in November 1944 he made SOE fully aware of this contact, which eventually provided the Allies with a great deal of important intelligence on the German authorities during the final months and weeks of the occupation. For example, Hauge was told that 'responsible German military circles in Norway', proposed 'to finish the occupation' after 'the collapse of Germany', and that three weeks before the capitulation there was still 350,000 enemy soldiers and civilian personnel in the country. On 7 May, it was Hammersen that became the official liaison officer between the Wehrmacht and Milorg.⁹³

On 8 May the general order for the mobilisation of the Home Forces across the country was issued and from this point it was no longer an underground army. In line with the directives issued by SL in September and December 1944, key sites, such as harbours, communications, and important public buildings were quickly taken over by Milorg units in order to ensure the protection of the country's industrial and communications infrastructure. Of the estimated 40,000 members of the Home Forces in Norway, 19,000 were eventually mobilised for protection duties and

⁹³ PRO: memo from AD/X.1 to A/CD (Lt. Col. H.N. Spørborg) ref. ADX/97, 28 November 1944, and paper entitled 'Draft', 17 November, in HS6/169. Pryser, *Hitlers hemmelige agenter*, pp. 162-164.

although preparations had been made to destroy some key sites, 'not a single bridge' was blown, or 'a single quay or power station' destroyed.⁹⁴ In accordance with lists that had been drawn up earlier Milorg units arrested members of NS, Norwegians who had fought for the Wehrmacht and informers, as well as some members of the German security apparatus.⁹⁵ All these tasks were undertaken by recruits from a clandestine army that had been given leadership, largely trained and at least in part lightly armed and equipped through the efforts of SOE in close collaboration with FO.

According to General Sir Andrew Thorne when the Allied troops arrived in Norway, 'peace and order prevailed everywhere', which meant that the whole of the forces under his command were 'available for the control of the German forces' and this allowed him to 'impose disarmament terms' from the very beginning without distraction. Nevertheless, as Jens Chr. Hauge wrote later, it was the Germans that still 'held real power', and it needed an Allied operation to liberate Norway. In other words the Home Forces were only ever able to undertake a supportive role alongside regular forces.⁹⁶ Many of the recruits were unarmed, some were untrained, and most only had light weapons: a 'very special army' according to Hauge.⁹⁷ The view of General Thorne was that they were a match for any force that was not 'well supplied with support weapons', by which he presumably meant artillery, tanks, and aircraft, which the German units in Norway still had.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the Home Forces played an important symbolic role in the early hours and days after the German surrender in Europe. Their presence on the streets and at key sites across Norway represented an immediate return of some form of legitimate national authority in the country in the period prior to the arrival of Allied forces.

⁹⁴ For example, in Bergen the Germans made preparations to blow up the quays by placing explosives in containers resembling gas cylinders 1.60 m long suspended in shafts in two rows 5 metres apart. *Den norske regjerings virksomhet: fra 9 april til 22 juni 1945, bind IV, forsvarsdepartementet*, p. 125. PRO: transcription of notes taken by SN (P) (Sir George Montagu-Pollock), during his visit to Norway in 1945 in HS2/213. Paper entitled, 'Norwegian Home Front', written by General Andrew Thorne in October 1945 in WO106/1984.

⁹⁵ Hauge, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 134-135.

⁹⁶ PRO: paper entitled, 'Norwegian Home Front', by General Sir Andrew Thorne, October 1945, in WO106/1984.

⁹⁷ Members of the Home Forces had white armbands with Norwegian colours whilst the police had black armbands with 'Politi' written in red. See: Hauge, *Frigjøringen*, p. 135.

⁹⁸ At the liberation the German forces in Norway possessed 131 tanks, and although considered obsolete they were still in good condition. PRO: letter from General Sir Andrew Thorne, Commander Allied Land Forces to CIGS, (GOW 73), 15 July 1945, in WO106/1983. Report on the visit to Allied Land Forces Norway by MO3 Colonel, 14-18 June 1945, in WO216/568.

From 9 May, through the implementation of operations ‘Doomsday’ and then ‘Apostle’, Allied forces moved into Norway and by the middle of June totalled around 30,000.⁹⁹ Included in this were the Special Force Detachments that accompanied the Police Battalions from Sweden and Allied troops as they arrived in the country. These provided an important link between the local Milorg leadership and the DKs, the Allied ‘Zone Commanders’ that had military responsibility for the regions of Norway, and the HQ of ‘Force 134’. They also worked closely with local Milorg units in helping to enforce law and order in the more remote areas, such as in the north and west.¹⁰⁰

Under the terms of surrender the German forces were moved to reserves, disarmed, and ultimately returned to their homeland. The arrival of King Haakon on 7 June saw the end of the military phase of the liberation and the return of constitutional government in Norway. On 9 June 15,000 men from Milorg filed past the King in Oslo, followed on 28 June by 205 men from the Linge Company and sixty men from the Shetlands Base in their last official duty. On 15 July the Home Forces were disbanded followed by the Special Force Detachments. During June and July the formation of eighteen Light Infantry Battalions had also begun and these would provide the core of a provisional Norwegian army that when the German forces were no longer considered a risk would take over from Allied forces in Norway. SOE’s Norwegian section was closed on 7 September 1945 and the last British troops left Norway on 27 December 1945.¹⁰¹

IV

Conclusion

During 1944 and 1945, SOE operations in Norway in close collaboration with FO and Milorg, reached a scale and intensity that had not been seen over the previous four years. The nature of these operations also changed with a move from *coup de*

⁹⁹ On 3 May the only first-line troops under the control of Scotco were two SAS regiments still fighting in Germany. The 1st Airborne Division, minus the 1st Parachute brigade, was assigned for Norway at the last moment. ‘Doomsday’ began on 9 May and up until end of that month over 7000 men were air-lifted into Oslo and Stavanger. The first ‘Doomsday’ sea-lift arrived in mid-May and in early June the American 474 Infantry Regiment (Reinforced) arrived in Drammen and Oslo. See: Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 325-366. Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. II, pp. 271-274. Hafsten [et al] *Flyalarm: luftkrigen over Norge*, pp. 290-294.

¹⁰⁰ NHM: SOE archive, boks 11, mappe 10/8/1, Wilson’s mappe, Appendix P, ‘Special Force detachment Force 134’.

¹⁰¹ Mann, *British Policy*, pp. 358-366. Færøy, *Frigjøringen*, pp. 45-46.

main attacks against strategic targets to tactical sabotage, and a shift from preparing a guerrilla army in Norway to support an eventual Allied landing, to preparing an indigenous clandestine army that could act as a protective force within the country in the days after the expected German surrender or collapse and the arrival of significant Allied forces from the Continent.

Behind this change was the shift in the strategic background of Europe that occurred after 6 June 1944. With the successful launch of Operation Overlord, SOE activity in Norway became directly subservient to Allied progress on the Continent, rather than helping to prepare the way for it. The liberation was also dependent on the speed and ultimately the success of the Allied offensive. Only after a German unconditional surrender would the military forces required be made available for Norway. It was within this context that the Home Forces were seen as an important local resource that could be armed, trained, and prepared through SOE, and ultimately used in the potentially uncertain period within the country immediately after the expected German collapse.

This does not mean that political and other issues did not also play a part. The decision by the Home Front that allowed Milorg to collaborate in attacks against military targets from the spring of 1944 had a major impact on the scale of sabotage in the country. The liberation of Norway was the primary objective of the Norwegian government in London, and as it believed that Milorg would be its main military contribution to this, it fully supported and contributed to SOE's effort to prepare and organise a clandestine army. The difficult post-war issues that plagued SOE activities in other theatres also did not hamper collaboration in Norway. The constitutional authority of the government-in-exile was recognised both at home and abroad and agreement had been reached with the Home Front as to how the democratic process would be restored in Norway after the liberation. Although conditions within the country, the nature of the occupation, still hampered the efforts of SOE, FO, and Milorg, co-operation and organisation had reached such a level that the major effort to prepare the Home Forces for the liberation was pushed forward with, notwithstanding many local difficulties. Consequently, even though there was never a fully equipped or prepared secret army in Norway, local forces eventually made a valuable contribution to the liberation, although it was not the contribution that had originally been envisaged in the difficult months following the collapse of France in 1940. The

strategic concept of using secret guerrilla army, which was a product of Britain's militarily weak and isolated position in 1940, was fortunately no longer required.

CONCLUSION

SOE carried out an assortment of activities in Norway between the summer of 1940 and the liberation in May 1945, ranging from sabotage and subversion to attempts to organise a clandestine guerrilla army. The objective of this thesis has, however, not been to narrate these events as has often been the case with SOE histories, but to look behind them and analyse the influences and factors that shaped the overall plan of action for Norway as articulated by the series of policy documents produced by SOE and later SFHQ between 1940 and 1945. Consequently, using archives in both Britain and Norway including recently released material and a combination of British and Norwegian secondary sources, this thesis has centred on SOE in Norway and its place within the wider strategic and political context. It has also for the first time brought together the many diverse issues surrounding SOE interest in this theatre and where appropriate, based on a re-examination of old material or a consideration of the latest material, has produced some new and different interpretations.

The initial proposition was that in the case of Norway it was strategic factors, SOE and particularly the country's contribution within the wider strategic context in Europe that remained the fundamental influence behind the evolution of policy and therefore ultimately operations at a local level. Political factors, represented by the interests of the Norwegian government in exile and the resistance organisations that emerged in response to Norway's occupation, primarily Milorg, were also important, but although they moulded policy and tempered it in some ways, they did not dictate its essential structure. This was the same for collaborative issues, defined as the relationship between SOE and the other agencies such as COHQ, PWE, the RN, RAF, and even SIS, all of which took an interest and were active in this theatre.

The subsequent examination of policy and the strategic, political, and collaborative issues that were behind it has shown, however, that SOE operations in Norway were ultimately the result of a coming together of all these influences. Furthermore, it was the combination of factors that was particular to Norway that gave rise to the nature of clandestine activities in this theatre. The first and most significant of these was strategic, and political and collaborative forces never undermined its formative importance. The combination of short and long-term aims, which remained at the heart of SOE's plans for Norway from the autumn of 1940, originated within a British forward strategy that was formulated during the difficult

conditions of the summer of 1940. Consequently, the broad mix of SOE operations was directly linked to the strategic beginnings of this organisation and the contribution that it was initially believed it could make to the defeat of Germany. More significantly, however, the military worth of the short and long-term strands of policy and their interrelationship between 1940 and 1945 was ultimately determined by Norway's peripheral position and subservience to the main thrust of British and later Allied strategy and operations in Europe. It was this particular condition that was the principal influence on SOE policy and activities in this theatre.

Nevertheless, SOE's plans for Norway could not be divorced from political matters, the organisation's relationship with the Norwegian government in exile and Milorg, as well as the nature of the occupation and its impact on the development of resistance in Norway. The crucial point about these influences, however, was that they were on the whole beneficial. This meant that SOE was able to implement its aims in Norway largely on its terms and without the disruption or complication that was often caused by the major political difficulties it experienced when operating within other occupied countries. Through and as a result of its strong relationship with the Norwegian authorities and ultimately Milorg, SOE ensured that its plans for Norway remained predominately intact, under the control of the Allied High Command, and therefore in step with wider strategic requirements. The benefits of effective collaboration were also not confined to relations with the Norwegian government. A significant proportion of SOE's activity in Norway, such as the series of amphibious raids carried out in association with COHQ or the sea-borne operations that were co-ordinated under the authority of ACOS, were the result of its ability to successfully work with or alongside the other organisations that also took a military interest in this theatre. Relations at a local operational level in Norway were predominately cordial and often close.

The strategic factors that were pertinent to Norway were all ultimately linked to its marginal position in relation to the rest of Europe. Initially this meant that SOE's early plans for the country originated within a policy that was not specifically designed for Norwegian conditions but for Continental conditions. And were part of a forward strategy that meant that clandestine activity, particularly the organisation of secret armies had to be co-ordinated across the occupied countries. Nonetheless, Norway was from a very early point also considered to be a theatre where sabotage and subversion could be quickly and effectively implemented. It had a long and

accessible coastline and produced a number of what were considered important war materials. This seemed to make it ideal for small offensive operations such as amphibious raids or *coup de main* attacks, which required relatively little resource in terms of men and materials. As a result of the German occupation, which from the beginning had been resisted, it was also believed that there were the seeds of organised resistance that could be cultivated over the longer term into an underground army that would be able to support a possible future landing by regular forces in the south of the country. Moreover, there was a significant body of experience of both applying economic pressure against Germany through Norway and of carrying out clandestine operations within the country, which was passed to SOE by many of the figures that helped to establish its Scandinavian section in the summer of 1940. This gave added impetus to the development and implementation of its policy. Therefore, the various actions carried out by SOE in Norway during 1940 and 1941 were not opportunistic or a case of the organisation 'justifying its existence',¹ but were early, very small, but considered elements of a British long-term, forward strategy as it was applied to this theatre.

Nevertheless, Norway's position in relation to the rest of Europe, both geographically and strategically, soon led to contradictions within SOE policy. As the defeat of Germany was never going to be achieved through Norway, the description of the country as a strategic backwater is apt.² It was, however, exactly this that ultimately defined its contribution to the war in Europe. Despite early indications of an interest in a landing in the south of the country, from at least the spring of 1941 there were also signs that Norway's strategic and military value lay elsewhere. From April, SOE was fully aware that its activities could help to lock-up German divisions in this so-called backwater and thereby make it a constant drain on enemy resources. Therefore, the large number of German troops that were retained in this theatre throughout most of the occupation was not simply the fortuitous or unintentional result of the actions of organisations such as SOE, but the consequence of a conscious effort. This effort would, however, at the same time undermine SOE's long-term plans for Norway as an increase in the number of German divisions in a country that was ideally suited for defensive operations made an Allied landing extremely

¹ Riste, *London regjeringa*, vol. I, p. 109.

² Willmott, 'Operation Jupiter and Possible Landings in Norway', in Salmon (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, p. 98.

implausible, especially during 1941 and 1942 when military resources were scarce and there were other priorities, such as the defence of the UK and the protection of Britain's position in North Africa. Consequently, by August 1941 Norway was seen only as a theatre for possible subsidiary operations, and notwithstanding repeated calls for a Second Front and Churchill's enthusiasm by the late autumn of 1941 the country was deemed suitable for just two relatively small combined operations against economic and military targets along the Norwegian seaboard. From this point until May 1945, only minor sea-borne operations, *coup de main* attacks, and sabotage would be undertaken in the country. By the end of 1941, therefore, even before the entry of the USA into the war, Norway was a secondary theatre of operations and thereby directly ancillary to British and Allied strategy as it was ultimately implemented in the Mediterranean and northwest Europe.

It was Norway's subordinate status that shaped the nature of the operations that were undertaken within its borders between 1940 and 1945. It made it ideal for the extensive use of small raids and *coup de main* attacks against economic and military targets, which contributed to the undermining of German fighting strength. Not simply or primarily through disrupting supplies of important war materials, or through provoking a spirit of unease and apprehension amongst the occupying forces thereby adding to their security commitments, but also by helping to encourage enemy fears of an invasion. All of this helped to mislead Germany as to Allied intentions and led it to make an unnecessarily high military investment in a country that was marginal to the outcome of the war in Europe. Norway's main strategic value therefore was as part of the process of weakening and stretching the enemy and thereby helping to prepare the ground for the implementation of a final Allied offensive in northwest Europe that would complete Germany's defeat. In that sense the country was from even as early as 1941 in the shadow of what would eventually be Operation Overlord. Unfortunately, however, its marginal position also ensured that its liberation would have to await the successful completion of the war in Europe.

This is perhaps at odds with the view that Norway's strategic significance was represented by the threat posed by the presence from early 1942 of the bulk of the German surface fleet and a significant number of U-boats in the country, which along with the German Air Force posed a real threat to the Arctic convoys and a perceived threat to the Atlantic trade routes. This undoubtedly placed an extra burden on the Home Fleet and created a great deal of concern within the Admiralty, as is illustrated

by the huge effort to sink the *Tirpitz*. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that this had little impact on the progress of the Allied offensives across Europe, including the landings in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. The threat to the Arctic convoys was largely confined to the period between the winter and autumn of 1942, after which it began to decline, and ultimately major German warships only sank forty-seven Allied ships - about the same number as were lost to mines during any three month period. By the end of May 1943, the Battle of the Atlantic had been won, and after the disabling of the *Tirpitz* and the sinking of the *Scharnhorst* at the end of the year, the balance within northern waters had turned clearly in the Allies favour. It is also doubtful, as has been recently argued, that the Atlantic war was ever 'within Germany's power to win' and that it had any 'appreciable influence on the outcome of the war'.³ Consequently, the importance placed on the threat posed by the German fleet stationed in Norway although of significance to the British Admiralty was short-lived and has probably been overplayed.

Norway's marginal position in relation to the development of Allied strategy and operations in western Europe had an important impact on SOE policy in two ways. Firstly, it meant that from the end of 1941 and up to the summer of 1944, the immediate objective of attacking important war materials in Norway and thereby contributing to the strain on the enemy's war effort, became the priority. The importance of this element of policy reached its peak in 1943, as the pressure grew to intensify the burden on Germany and prepare the way for Overlord the following year. Secondly, it meant that the preparation of a secret army was not only given a lower priority, but that it was hampered by a lack of resources and had to continue in conditions of uncertainty over when and how the country would be liberated. From the summer of 1944, however, also as a result of Norway's marginal position, the relationship between these two strands of policy changed. With Allied manpower deployed elsewhere and therefore not immediately available to enforce the liberation, the preparation of a secret army became the priority. Sabotage was considered to be of lesser importance, although it continued in support of and therefore directly linked to operations on the Continent.

Despite the fundamental and principal significance of strategic factors, SOE's policy for Norway was further shaped by political considerations. The first of these

³ M. Milner, *Battle of the Atlantic*, (Stroud: Tempus Publishing, 2003), pp. 23, 235, 236.

was the crucial relationship between SOE and the Norwegian authorities in London. Importantly, both for the development of SOE's plans for this theatre and ultimately for its operations, the nature of this relationship eventually suited both parties. Through collaboration and an eventual partnership, SOE was able to accommodate Norwegian concerns and retain the use of Norwegian expertise and resources, which it was so dependent on, without having to significantly distort its aims. This contradicts previous accounts of the contact between SOE and Norwegian authorities, which argue that it was founded on scepticism and distrust toward Norwegians, and built on British terms. And it was only from early 1942, in response to the concerns of the Norwegian government that relations began to improve.⁴

There were two factors that defined SOE's attitude toward the Norwegian authorities. The first was its complete dependence on Norwegian volunteers to undertake its activities in this theatre; something that from the beginning it believed should and could only be done through and in association with their political representatives based in London. The Norwegian government in exile was the lawful representative of its nation's interests, something that was quickly recognised in the summer of 1940, and to disregard its authority would have been very risky. Consequently, from early August, SOE made contact with the relevant figures within the government and military authorities in order to allow it to begin the process of recruitment. Scepticism toward Norwegians, as with many other nationalities, was undoubtedly expressed, but pragmatism outweighed this. Contact was not therefore developed just on a dogmatic 'need to know' basis, but also on a practical basis; with those individuals that would ensure SOE received the manpower and support it required to become operational in this theatre. Restricting its contacts and the amount of information it passed on about its activities was also not unnatural for a new secret organisation and not uniquely applied to the Norwegian government. Moreover, SOE was required through its Charter to ensure that clandestine and subversive activities across the whole of Europe were kept in step with strategical requirements, which meant that it had to remain in control. And it was the need to strike a balance between retaining the use of Norwegian volunteers whilst safeguarding its dominant position that underlay its approach to and association with the government in exile throughout the war. It was not a relationship founded on negative, ethnocentric

⁴ This is largely a synthesis of the views expressed by Kjelstadli in *Hjemmestyrkene* and Riste in *London regjeringa*, vols. I & II.

views. From the beginning SOE believed it was working closely with the Norwegian authorities, and it is difficult to see what other approach it could have taken during 1940 and 1941 other than working through individual contacts. At the time, however, it meant that SOE had a free reign in Norway and its plans for this theatre were not in the beginning re-shaped or undermined by Norwegian interests.

It was the fear of losing influence and control, primarily over the use and development of Milorg but also over Norwegian manpower, that forced SOE to change tack and work with and through their military authorities in London in a more equitable and open way. At the same time the Norwegian government initiated important reforms to its military command and staff structure in exile. This led in early 1942 to the creation of *Forsvarets Overkommando* (FO), its Defence High Command, which enabled it to work in a far more co-ordinated and effective way with the British, develop clear policies in the sphere of clandestine operations, and ensured that it retrieved some control and influence over the use of its citizens on operations carried out on its soil. There was a clear understanding within FO that SOE was answerable to the COS, that its allies had the leadership of the war and the means to conduct it, and therefore its objectives could only be achieved and interests served through co-operation. From this point until the end of the war relations with SOE were built on a collaborative basis that ultimately served the purpose of all parties. For SOE it meant that through NIC (1) it secured the use of a unit of the Royal Norwegian army to carry out special operations in Norway, under the military authority of the Norwegian High Command, but ultimately under the strategic direction of the COS. Collaboration, however, also meant that restrictions on the distribution and sharing of information were no longer viable and that plans for this theatre had to be developed and implemented on a joint basis. Consequently, SOE had to accept that to cement its relationship with the Norwegian authorities and to guarantee its control over special operations in Norway, it had to adapt aspects of its policy to meet Norwegian concerns. This led to the abandonment or scaling back of some of SOE's *coup de main* operations and the original aim of developing a sabotage organisation within Norway was reluctantly sidelined. The longer-term aim of creating a clandestine army was, however, strengthened by collaboration as both parties shared the view that the resistance in Norway would ultimately play a significant role in the re-occupation of the country. On the whole, SOE developed a very successful alliance with the Norwegian authorities, which meant that its

objectives in this theatre were never severely damaged or complicated by political difficulties. They were eventually enhanced by the positive nature of the relationship.

The other factor that had a significant impact on the evolution of SOE's plans for this theatre was the response within Norway to the nature and form of its occupation. From the summer of 1940, this gradually resulted in organised and co-ordinated resistance to the German authorities and NS, which crystallised around two movements, Sivorg and Milorg. Both had a strong and influential central leadership based in Oslo that eventually worked closely with the government in London, with each other, and with the Norwegian people. Milorg, which became a branch of the Norwegian armed services, quickly developed its own stance, based on local conditions and past experience, on what its military contribution should be both prior to and at the liberation. The resistance in occupied Norway therefore had an authority both at home and in London that SOE was eventually forced to recognise and accept, although it took some time.

From the autumn of 1940, the relationship between SOE and Milorg was shaped by Britain's determination to make sure that an underground army in Norway conformed to British views over its structure and its role, prior to and during the country's liberation. There was never an intention to avoid or ignore Milorg; the objective was to incorporate it and make use of the potential manpower resources that it could call on. It was, however, this effort by SOE to take on the ownership of all armed resistance in Norway that was at the heart of the difficulties between the two organisations. As Milorg's early leadership was a product of local circumstances and recent experience its vision of a clandestine army did not readily conform to British ideas. This led to ongoing difficulties and distrust. Within this context, SOE's attempts to impose itself on Milorg, and then to work around its leadership both failed. It was only after events within Norway led to changes in Milorg's leadership, structure and ultimately its policy, combined with a realisation that Norwegian conditions would not allow two clandestine organisations to operate alongside each other that SOE accepted that it would have to work with Milorg. The issues surrounding sabotage and assassination perhaps best exemplify how crucial local factors were in shaping attitudes within Milorg and ultimately its relationship with SOE. Both are violent acts that when carried out risked major reprisals from the occupying authorities against the local population and resistance groups. Prior to 1944, however, after which local circumstances made it both necessary and

acceptable, Milorg refused to support the use of indigenous groups or civilians to undertake sabotage. The risk of carrying out such acts in the view of its leadership far outweighed the potential benefits. The destruction of an important industrial site might have a strategic or military value, but did nothing within the setting of occupied Norway to help in the development of a clandestine army, which was Milorg's single objective. Paradoxically, however, it was fully prepared to collaborate in carrying out assassinations, which were also extremely hazardous and violent acts, and from the beginning of 1943 it was working closely with SOE in training execution teams. In this case local factors, specifically the actions of informers and the Nazi police organisations, were a direct and serious threat to its objective of organising an underground army, and therefore something had to be done, whatever the danger.

It was during 1943, as communication and contact improved and after Milorg had fully accepted its subservience to FO and that decisions over its deployment would be made in London not Oslo, that relations with SOE improved. By the summer of 1944, these three parties had formed a close partnership under the authority of the Allied High Command. Nevertheless, it had taken a long time to get to this position and the process had been very problematic, although this was not especially significant whilst there was no possibility of an Allied landing in Norway. It once more came back to the country's position on the periphery of Europe, which meant that relations with Milorg only became particularly important during the final months of the occupation, when the preparation of clandestine forces in this theatre became a priority. It had, however, been left too late, and at the time of the German capitulation, despite a huge last minute effort, there was still not a fully armed or trained secret army in Norway.

The importance of collaboration on SOE policy and operations in Norway was also reflected in its readiness to work with the other British and American military organisations that took an interest in this theatre. From the autumn of 1940, SOE recognised that it would be required to assist with operations such as raids and air attacks, and that through working with COHQ or the Air Ministry it would be part of a wider strategic effort. It was, however, not only SOE that was aware of the potential benefits of co-operation. Even the 'professional military' had an appreciation of the value of SOE's more unconventional methods. The RN was fully prepared to make use of the organisation's skills in order to develop and employ various submersible vessels in its attempt to sink the *Tirpitz*. Through ACOS it

worked alongside SOE on a series of sea-borne operations against enemy shipping in Norwegian waters. Bomber Command was also prepared, when resources allowed, to attack targets that SOE had flagged up as unsuitable for sabotage. Behind this willingness to co-operate was the belief that Norway was a theatre where significant economic and military pressure could be applied against Germany, especially along the Norwegian seaboard and against some important industrial targets within the country. There was also an understanding within the regular services that this country, its terrain, long coastline, and the location of many of its important targets often made it particularly suited for more unorthodox methods. Ultimately, SOE's success in working with and alongside the regular armed services and other new military organisations was again advantageous to its plans for this theatre. It enabled it to extend and intensify its activities, especially at times when it neither had the resources or ability to undertake such actions alone. Moreover, notwithstanding the criticisms of each other and an element of rivalry, there was a realisation amongst the many organisations operating in this theatre that collaboration was more effective than conflict.

The culmination of SOE's policy was its operations, and it is these that exemplify how the strategic, political, and collaborative factors eventually came together and affected its actions at a local level. Furthermore, it is also important to reach a conclusion as to whether or not its actions had any military value or significance, especially as this is an issue that has so preoccupied previous historians.⁵

SOE was predominately involved in two types of activity in Norway. Firstly, there was sabotage, *coup de main* operations, and amphibious raids. Up to the summer of 1944 these were strategic operations that were a small part of the overall effort to wear down Germany, but once Overlord had been successfully launched they became tactical operations in direct support of the Allied offensive across Europe. From the spring of 1942, NIC (1) teams, made up of Norwegian volunteers often transported in Norwegian fishing boats, carried out attacks instigated by SOE, but planned and prepared in co-operation with the Norwegian authorities. Therefore, even though Milorg had no involvement in these operations, there was a direct and crucial Norwegian contribution. Many attacks were also undertaken in co-operation with or had an important input from the armed services or other military organisations

⁵ Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945*, pp. 7-8.

such as COHQ. All SOE operations against economic and military targets in Norway were therefore joint operations, and the participation of other agencies was crucial to both their implementation and eventual shape. The attacks against the production of heavy water in Norway, operations 'Freshman' and 'Gunnarside', exemplify this.

'Freshman', in the autumn of 1942, was a collaborative project that involved SOE, COHQ, the RAF, the 1st Airborne Division, and the Norwegian authorities, and which following SOE's recommendation targeted the hydroelectric plant at Vemork. As an air attack had been ruled out, owing to Norwegian concerns, it was believed that an operation to disable such a large site required a team of at least thirty, and therefore it was placed under the remit of COHQ. 'Gunnarside' the follow up attack in February 1943 was predominately Norwegian. It was a Norwegian idea that was actively promoted because it was a precision operation that would avoid widespread damage to the Norsk Hydro plant and power station and reduce the possibility of reprisals against the local population. It was based on Norwegian intelligence, and used a NIC (1) team, many of whom were locals. SOE instigated and authorised the operation, provided training and arranged transportation to the target. It was brilliantly executed, but it did not achieve its objective of a lengthy interruption in production of heavy water.

Ultimately, *coup de main* operations and raids against strategic targets in Norway had a limited long-term economic effect. Delays and disruption were often caused, but unless a target was regularly revisited, such as the Orkla pyrite mines, the influence was temporary and overall production levels were not seriously diminished. Everything was, however, done to make these operations appear British and on the whole they did not result in widespread reprisals against the local population, and therefore in that sense they were relatively successful. They were also significant in other ways. They required little resource: just small teams of Norwegian volunteers, with a relatively small amount of equipment, and for the most part using only a handful of fishing vessels. Notwithstanding this they often created security scares out of all proportion to their size. Along with amphibious raids, the movements of the British Home Fleet in this theatre, and strategic deception, these attacks helped to feed Hitler's fear that Britain retained an interest in Norway and an ability and intention to return to the country at some future point. They did, therefore, have a strategic and military value.

From the summer of 1944, the nature of sabotage in Norway not only changed, but with the support of Milorg and the Norwegian authorities it also intensified and became widespread across the south of the country. This intensification did not mean, however, that all objectives were achieved. Whilst a considerable amount of material that was directly and immediately important to the German war effort was destroyed, as with oil and petrol, the effort to stem the flow of German divisions out of Norway through railway sabotage had little impact. The results were therefore patchy. Nevertheless, the involvement of Milorg was symbolically important, as this was its first direct and major contribution to the Allied war effort and a reflection of the growing confidence and maturity of the resistance movements in Norway. It also illustrates how far Milorg's policy on the use of clandestine forces in Norway had moved from the original aim that it should never be more than a mobilisation force employed and armed only after the arrival of Allied forces in the country. It was an evolution that continued even after the war when plans were put together by the Norwegian authorities to organise 'stay-behind' units that would mobilise and go into action in the event of a Soviet occupation.⁶

The other category of SOE activity consisted of operations that set out to organise and prepare a secret army. Although these also had strategic origins, they were particularly affected by Norway's position as a secondary theatre of war. With little prospect of a landing in the country, the training and equipping of clandestine forces was until the autumn of 1944, plagued by a lack of resources. The lower priority accorded to these operations and the uncertainty surrounding the future role of a clandestine army also complicated matters. Teams sent into Norway eventually had to prepare local groups for a series of possible scenarios, not just an Allied landing. The failure to work with Milorg in the early years also slowed the whole process and made it more problematic. And the attempts to keep resistance groups in *situ* over a long time period also proved extremely difficult in the face of the efforts of Norwegian informers and the German security police, who caused considerable harm to not only SOE, but also Milorg and the local population. All this meant that prior to 1944, SOE was largely on the defensive and made only sporadic and limited progress toward organising an armed and prepared clandestine army.

⁶ O. Riste, *The Norwegian Intelligence Service 1945-1970*, (London: Frank Cass, 1999), pp. 34-54.

The outcome of SOE activities was also governed by another set of factors. Sabotage, subversion and the organising of resistant groups were all beset by the many local difficulties of working in occupied Norway. Factors, such as the extremes of climate, topography, hours of daylight, and surviving in an occupied country with small isolated communities where the arrival of a stranger was immediately noticed, made success very elusive. The decision and determination to carry out an operation was therefore alone no guarantee of success. Nevertheless, SOE in co-operation with its partners carried out a range of operations that although not always successful contributed to making Norway an increasing and unwelcome burden on the German war effort. At the end of the war there was also an underground army in place that, although certainly not fully prepared or equipped, was able to make a significant contribution in ensuring that the liberation of Norway and the transition from occupation to lawful government ran particularly smoothly. In many ways Norway was an ideal country where irregular and clandestine methods of warfare, whether raids, propaganda, *coup de main* attacks, or cultivating resistance, could make a very small but cost-effective strategic contribution to the Allied victory in Europe.

APPENDIX A¹

LIST OF SOE STAFF CRYPTONYMS FOR SCANDINAVIA AND NORWAY

To help ensure security SOE provided its staff and its Norwegian colleagues with a series of symbols to use in internal correspondence instead of their real names. Below is a list of the symbols and the people they refer to that are regularly found in the SOE Norwegian files.

Senior Staff:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| A/CD | Air Commodore A.R. Boyle. In March 1943 he replaced Mr J. Hanbury-Williams as assistant to CD, the Executive Director of SOE, with responsibility for intelligence, security and personnel. He had moved from the Air Ministry in July 1941 to take over responsibility for intelligence in SOE with the symbol AD/B. |
| A/DA | Sir Charles Hambro used this symbol from 6 January to 17 November 1941. From 11 January he reported direct to CD, and from 23 March 1941 became CD's deputy on all matters concerning SO2. |
| AD/E | Brigadier E. E. Mockler-Ferryman used this symbol from April 1943. He was deputy to Major-General Colin McV. Gubbins and in May 1943 he became Director of the 'London Group' with responsibility for northwest Europe, and a member of SOE Council. |
| ADE/US | Colonel J. Haskell, who was Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman's equivalent within OSS London. From November 1943 these men jointly ran SOE/SO HQ in London. |

¹ Compiled from the following sources: PRO: HS2, HS7, HS8, & HS9 files. NHM: SOE and FO IV archives. Documents and information from the SOE Personal Files of Captain H. J. Marks, E. M. Nielsen, G. O. Wiskeman, Lt. Col. J. S. Wilson, Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters RNVR, Lt. Commander F. N. Stagg RN, Major P. W. T. Boughton-Leigh, supplied by the SOE Adviser, Records and Historical Department, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London.

AD/M	Lt. Colonel H. N. Saunders, who ran a special staff branch within SHAEF called G3 or 'Musgrave', which was the link between SFHQ and SCAEF.
AD/N	Rear Admiral A. H. Taylor and head of SOE's Naval Directorate from its creation in April 1943.
AD/S	Lt. Colonel Harry Spörborg used this symbol as Regional Head for Western Europe from early 1941 until May 1942. His responsibilities included Scandinavia and 'F' Section (France), but was expanded in spring 1941 to include Belgium and Holland. From November 1941, Spörborg reported to Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins, who at the same time was made 'Director of Operations'. In May 1942, Spörborg was made Personal Private Secretary to CD, but remained available for consultation on matters concerning Scandinavia and was responsible for working with PWE on operational propaganda. In September 1943, Spörborg became V/CD, deputy to CD.
CD	Executive Director of SOE. From August 1940 this was Sir Frank Nelson, who in May 1942 was replaced by Sir Charles Hambro. Hambro remained until September 1943 when Major-General Colin McV. Gubbins took over and continued as CD until the end of the war.
D	Major General Lawrence Grand. The former head of Section D who was offered a post with SOE but at the end of September 1940 decided to resign.
D/CD	Charles Hambro who from November 1941 used this symbol as deputy to SOE's Executive Director, a position he retained until he became CD in May 1942. In July 1942, in response to the 'Playfair' report, an investigation into SOE's administration, this position was split creating two deputies, D/CD (A) and D/CD (O). In November 1943, however, in yet another re-organisation, Mr P. Murray was appointed to run SOE's internal organisation and given the symbol D/CD.

- D/CD (A) Mr J. Hanbury-Williams who was appointed in July 1942 as deputy to CD with responsibility for administrative services. Air Commodore Boyle replaced him in March 1943.
- D/CD (O) Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins used this symbol from July 1942 when he was appointed second deputy to CD with responsibility for the Western and Central European regions. All the relevant Country Sections and services ancillary to operations were therefore placed under Gubbins, who also became SOE's military adviser to the COS.
- D/S Initially General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall who in December 1942 was appointed head of a Scandinavian Region. In March 1943 there was a temporary revision to the previous arrangement of separate Country Sections. In the following September, however, a Scandinavian Region was brought back under Lt. Colonel J. S. Wilson who took on the symbol D/S for the rest of the war.
- DS/US Lt. Commander F. W. G. Unger-Vetlesen (USNR) who was Wilson's equivalent at OSS office in London with responsibility for Scandinavia. In June 1944 he became a member of the Anglo-Norwegian Collaboration Committee (ANCC).
- DS.1 Major F. Cromwell who from May 1943 to June 1944 was OSS representative at SOE's Norwegian Section. He also joined the ANCC before being replaced by Lt. Commander Unger-Vetlesen.
- DS/Plans Major C. S. Hampton who was the first Commandant of STS 26, the Norwegian section's Special Training School (STS) near Aviemore, from November 1941 to September 1943. In April 1944 he was made responsible for liaison duties on operations and plans between SOE's Norwegian Section and Scottish Command and given the symbol DS/Plans. In October 1944 he took over command of the Special Force Detachment for Norway.

- L Colonel A. M. Anstruther, SOE's Planning Officer in 1941.
- M Brigadier Colin McV. Gubbins was given this symbol when he joined SOE in November 1940 and was made head of training and operations, with responsibility for raiding parties, and given control over the Polish and Czech Sections. Under him Colonel J. S. Wilson was responsible for training and Colonel R. H. Barry for operations. In November 1941 Gubbins was made 'Director of Operations' with responsibility for all operations directed from England, a position he retained until the SOE organisation was reformed in July 1942.
- M/CD Major-General Colin McV. Gubbins who from March to June 1943 used this symbol as deputy to Charles Hambro.
- S Head of the Scandinavian Section. From August 1940 until December 1940 this was Charles Hambro. Lt. Colonel H. N. Spurborg replaced Hambro and retained the position until October 1941 when George Wiskeman took over responsibility for the Region until January 1942 when it was broken up into separate country sections.
- V/CD Major-General Colin McV. Gubbins became V/CD on 1 June 1943. He retained this position until September 1943 when he became CD. Lt. Col. H. N. Spurborg replaced him as V/CD.

SOE Norwegian section staff:

- D/G Mouse Lt. J. L. James Chaworth-Musters who worked for Section D before joining SOE in summer 1940. During that summer he was referred to as D/G Mouse in SOE correspondence, the 'mouse' reflecting his background as a zoologist. Once the Scandinavian section was up and running he went under the symbol S.3.
- SN Lt. Colonel J. S. Wilson who from January 1942 used the symbol as head of the Norwegian Section. He continued to use the symbol even

after he was made head of the Scandinavian Region in September 1943.

- S.1 Commander Frank Stagg who in autumn 1940 was made principal adviser to Lt. Col. H. N. Sporborg. At the beginning of 1941 he was given responsibility for Norway under Sporborg as head of the Scandinavian section. When a separate Norwegian Section was created in January 1942 he remained as an adviser and a secretary on the ANCC until he left SOE in July 1942.
- S.2 Major R. C. Holme, who worked at the SOE Mission in Stockholm until he was arrested by the Swedish authorities. He was eventually released and returned to Britain where by 1942 he was working in SOE's Norwegian section with responsibility for translations and records. He eventually moved to the intelligence section where he continued to be responsible for translations.
- S.3 Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters who during 1941 was closely involved in the recruitment and training of Norwegian volunteers. In January 1942 his symbol changed to SN/I when he moved to the intelligence section.
- S.3.1 Martin Linge, who was a liaison officer with the British at Åndalsnes in April 1940 until he was injured and evacuated to Britain. In August he again became a liaison officer, but this time between SOE and the Norwegian authorities with responsibility for recruiting Norwegians to serve on behalf of SOE. Out of this came what is known as the 'Linge Company', officially called the Norwegian Independent Company No 1, (NIC 1) the unit of the Norwegian armed forces that carried out operations in Norway on behalf of SOE and FO. Linge was killed in December 1941 whilst taking part on Operation Archery.
- SA A. A. Flygt.

- SN.A Major Malcolm Munthe, who had been SOE's representative with responsibility for Norway at the British Legation in Stockholm between October 1940 and July 1941. After arriving back in Britain he worked in SOE's Norwegian section with responsibility for organising a secret army in Norway, eventually in association with Milorg, provision of W/T operators and briefing of agents. He left the section in February 1943.
- SN. A.1 Captain P. F. S. Douglas, who was originally Munthe's assistant. He took over from Munthe and had a long career in the Norwegian section eventually in 1944 becoming SN/OPS with responsibility for *coup de main* operations and by the end of 1944 SN/O with joint responsibility for the various departments within the section.
- SN/I From January to May 1942 this was Lt. Chaworth-Musters, who then moved to STS 26 and took up the symbol SN/P, which he retained until he joined SIS in August 1943. Between May 1942 and December 1944, Captain H. A. Nyberg was SN/I with responsibility for collection and collation of intelligence, liaison with FO II, (the intelligence department of the Norwegian High Command), propaganda agents, and liaison with PWE and Bård Krogvig at the Norwegian Information Office. In December he was sent to SOE Mission in Stockholm where under the cover of Assistant Military Attaché he was responsible for liaising on the training of the Norwegian Police forces. Captain J. D. M. Carr took over responsibility for intelligence.
- SN/O Initially Captain J. C. Adamson, who in 1942 was given responsibility for *coup de main* operations and liaison with COHQ. By spring 1944, he had taken over responsibility for planning and given the symbol SN/plans. He retained this position until October 1944 when he was dropped into Norway as part of Operation Scale. He was the only Norwegian section staff officer to be sent into Norway during its occupation. He was arrested soon after landing and eventually sent to Germany, although he survived the war.

- SNS Major F. W. Ram, who until July 1943 had administrative responsibility for the Shetlands and Burghead bases, the maintenance of the boats, ordering stores, false papers, and coastal intelligence. He also had responsibility for seats on the Stockholm Air Service, liaison with ACOS, SIS, and the Norwegian intelligence office.
- SN. S1 Captain F. K. M. Carver, initially assistant to Major Ram, he remained in the department responsible for the Shetlands Base until the end of the war.
- SN. S2 Lieutenant K. H. Cochrane, originally responsible for stores and clothing at Chiltern Court he had by autumn 1944 become SN/Ops with responsibility for agents, air operations and radios.
- SN.T Captain P. W. Boughton-Leigh who joined SOE in the summer of 1940 and remained until the end of the war in 1945. During the five years he worked with training and personnel as liaison officer between NIC (1) and HQ.
- SN/Plans.1 Lt. Commander, Sir George Montagu-Pollock. Pollock had originally worked at the press department of the British legation in Oslo. He was interned after the occupation until November 1942 when he was released and returned to the UK. In February 1943 he was placed in charge of the Norwegian section's sea operations with the symbol SN/O.1. This eventually included liaison with ACOS in preparation for the 'Welman' and 'Vestige' operations. In March 1944, however, he joined SOE's Norwegian section staff working on planning with the symbol SN/Plans.1. By March 1945 he had responsibility for the all of departments within the section as well as *coup de main* operations and had the symbol SN (P). On 6 June 1945 he left for Norway where he undertook a tour of the districts reporting on Milorg, its level of preparedness, and the impact of SOE's *coup de main* operations.

SZ Lt. Colonel Sporborg who was responsible for Norway until December 1940 when he took over responsibility for the Scandinavian Section.

SOE Mission at the British Legation in Stockholm

Numbers were used as symbols for the staff, agents, members of Milorg, members of the Norwegian authorities, and contacts in Stockholm.

- 4301 Malcolm Munthe.
- 4305 Odd Starheim, leader of SOE's Cheese operation.
- 4308 Daniel Ring, former Milorg member who fled to England in April 1940 and eventually worked as liaison officer between the SOE and Norwegian military authorities in Stockholm.
- 4309 Pål Frisvold, Milorg pioneer and member of its central council who fled to Stockholm in the spring of 1941.
- 4318 Major Helseth, Milorg pioneer who was arrested in the spring of 1941.
- 4319 Korsvig Rasmussen, one of Odd Starheim's contacts in Oslo in the spring of 1941.
- 4340 Lt. H. Marks, originally of the Yorks and Lancs regiment, who fought in the Norwegian Campaign. Initially reported missing he managed to get to Stockholm and in November 1940 was recruited by SOE. He took over from Malcolm Munthe in July 1941 but after continued pressure from the Swedish government he returned to Britain in October. In early 1942 he was put in charge of SOE's naval base at Burghead in Scotland and given the reference SN/B. He drowned in a sailing accident April 1943.
- 4341 R. C. Holme (see above).
- 4344 Major Andrew Croft who had in late 1939 accompanied Malcolm Munthe to Sweden and then Norway to assist in the transportation of British arms and equipment to Finland. He was in Bergen when German forces arrived in April 1940 but managed to flee back to Britain. He eventually took over from Munthe as Assistant Military Attaché at the British Legation in Stockholm in 1941 and gave part of his time to continuing some of Munthe's work. From early 1942 he

- assisted W. H. Montagu-Pollock in co-ordinating SOE activity out of the Legation until he finally returned to Britain in November 1942.
- 4345 Anne Waring, who worked in the Norwegian Section at the SOE Mission in Stockholm and became assistant to Edgar Nielsen, who took over responsibility for Norway in December 1941. Mrs I. Bernardes replaced her in early 1943.
- 4346 Edgar Nielsen. He had worked in Norway on and off since 1916 for SIS and then the Foreign Office. He was Vice Consul at Skien in 1940 when Norway was invaded. After two weeks he escaped to Sweden but was eventually appointed vice-consul at Petsamo in Finland. By the summer of 1941 he was back working in the British Legation in Stockholm and from October 1941 gradually took over the work that Munthe and Marks had carried out in Norway. In December 1941 he was given full responsibility for Norway, a post he held until the end of the war. In July 1942 his symbol changed to 8627.
- 4350 Mr W. H. Montagu-Pollock, 'Counsellor' at the British Legation in Stockholm. In early 1942 he began to co-ordinate all SOE activity from the Legation with Andrew Croft assisting him. In July 1942 Lt. Colonel George Larden (6201) took over his work.
- 4401 Peter Tennant, who in 1940 was Press Attaché at the British Legation in Stockholm. In the autumn of 1940 he was made responsible for SOE activity in Sweden, Denmark, and Germany along with propaganda activities. His SOE duties were, however, eventually scaled back although he continued to have responsibility for SOE's Swedish section in Stockholm until November 1942. In January 1944 he took on responsibility for liaison on matters regarding the training of the Norwegian Police Battalions in Sweden.

In 1942 the symbols for SOE Mission at the British legation in Stockholm were changed and some new ones were added.

- 6200 George Wiskeman.
- 6201 Lt. Colonel George Larden (see above).
- 6202 Mr W. H. Montagu-Pollock (see above).

- 6203 Peter Tennant (see above).
- 6212 Commander John Martin, SIS station chief in Stockholm.
- 6213 Mr Harry Södermann, head of the Swedish State Criminological Institute in Stockholm and friend of Peter Tennant. In June 1942 he visited the Norwegian military authorities in London and became an important contact and link in the training and equipping of the Norwegian Police Troops - Operation Beefeater.
- 6233 Symbol for the British Legation in Stockholm.
- 7404 Mr R. B. Turnbull, previously 4351, who from March 1941 was responsible for SOE's Danish section at the British Legation. At the end of 1942 he took over responsibility for the co-ordination of SOE activities out of Stockholm.
- 8638 Colonel Ole Berg, the former Milorg pioneer who fled to Sweden at the end of 1942. He eventually became the Norwegian Military Attaché and Military Inspector in Stockholm.
- 8628 Mrs I Bernardes (see above).
- 8626 Sverre Ellingsen who in 1943 took over from Daniel Ring in Stockholm.
- 8629 Major-General Wilhelm Hansteen, who became the Norwegian Chief of Defence in February 1942.
- 8632 Axel Baumann, head of MI IV in Stockholm from January 1944.
- 8639 Colonel Helseth (see above).
- 8634 Norwegian Home Front Office in Stockholm.
- 8627 the symbol used by Edgar Nielsen from July 1942 (see above).
- 8633 Norwegian Legation in Stockholm.
- 8686 Major H. Nyberg, who arrived in Stockholm in December 1944 (see above).
- 8625 Lt. Colonel W. F. W. Ram who initially worked for SOE's Norwegian section in London (see above). In spring 1945 he was moved to Stockholm under the cover of Assistant Military Attaché to correlate the work of the Norwegian Section as a whole, including 'Beefeater'.
- 8647 Lt. Colonel Rørholt, who took over from Axel Baumann as head of MI IV in 1945.
- 8637 Milorg.

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| No. 24 | Code name for Gunnar Sønsteby, SOE's foremost agent in the Oslo area from spring 1942. |
| No. 12 | Daniel Ring (see above). |
| No. 38 | Sverre Ellingsen (see above). |

The OSS Westfield Mission in Stockholm

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| Apollo | Colonel George S. Brewer, head of the Mission |
| Vaudeville | Hans Ericksen, responsible for the Norwegian section of the Mission |

The Shetlands Base

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| SN/L | Major L. H. Mitchell, who was commanding officer at the base until November 1942. |
| SN/L.1 | Lt. D. A. Howarth, who joined the base as second in command in spring 1941. |
| SN/L.2 | Lt. A. W. Sclater R.M., known under the pseudonym A. W. Rogers, who took over from Mitchell in 1942. |
| SN/L.4 | Lt. Leif Hauge, R.N.N., who from summer 1942, was in command of the Norwegian recruits at the base. Lt. H. Henriksen replaced him in the summer of 1944. |
| SN/C.1 | Leif A. Larsen, who because of his exploits became known as 'Shetlands Larsen'. |

Staff in the Norwegian High Command who worked closely with SOE

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| SB | Thore Boye, Bureau Chief in the Norwegian Ministry of Defence and Norwegian secretarial representative on the ANCC. |
| SM | Lt. Commander L. M. Marstrander, an original Norwegian member of ANCC who from spring 1942 was central in formalising the relationship between the Norwegian recruits at the Shetlands Base and the Norwegian High Command. He lost his life whilst taking part in Operation Carhampton in January 1943. |
| SP | Finn Nagell who arrived in Britain in November 1940. In January 1941 he set up and run the <i>Forsvarsdepartement Etteretningskontor</i> , the Norwegian Ministry of Defence Intelligence Office (FD/E), which amongst other things had responsibility for contact with the 'English |

Secret Services'. In February 1942 the Norwegian Defence High Command was re-formed with an intelligence section, FO II. Nevertheless, FD/E remained in place and under Nagell it had responsibility for gathering intelligence from Norway. In April 1942, it was also divided into five departments. In July 1944, however, it was merged into FO II under Colonel Roscher Lund, although Major Finn Nagell continued as his second in command.

SR Lieutenant Jan H. Reimers, a chemical engineer from Trondheim and pupil of Leif Tronstad he worked for FO II and collating much of the industrial intelligence that was so central to SOE *coup de main* operations in Norway. He became the central figure behind the series of SOE/FO anti-sabotage operations that were put together in 1944-1945.

ST Professor Leif Tronstad was the central figure in the planning of the SOE operations against heavy water production in Norway. He had helped to set up the plant in the 1930s along with Jomar Brun, but when Norway was occupied he became involved in the resistance making contact with both SOE and SIS. He escaped to Britain in autumn 1941, and from 1942 he worked within the Norwegian High Command and became a member of the ANCC. His industrial background was vital in helping SOE prepare many of its *coup de main* operations. In October 1944 he was dropped into Norway on Operation Sunshine but in the following March was killed in action.

SU Bjarne Øen, head of FO IV from December 1942. He worked closely with Lt. Colonel J. S. Wilson until the end of the war.

Sverre Haugen This was SOE's cover name for Jomar Brun, the Chief Engineer at Vemork. Brun was the main source of intelligence for operations 'Freshman' and 'Gunnarside' before he fled to Britain in November 1942. He was in contact with Tronstad from early 1940 and during 1942 sent vital material back to London, such as drawings of the site and details on production.

FO IV staff

SX Major Jens Henrik Nordlie, originally a leading figure in Milorg. He eventually fled to Britain and in July 1944 was made responsible for the District Specialists in FO IV, which meant that he worked closely with SN/Ops in SOE's Norwegian section.

District Specialists

SXE.1 Lt. Owre, responsible for eastern Norway.
SXS.1 Lt. Ellingsen, responsible for southern Norway.
SXN.1 Lt. Martens-Meyer, responsible for western Norway.
SXT.1 Lt. Breida, responsible for the county of Trøndelag.
SXN.1 Mr Jæger, responsible for northern Norway.
SX.M Captain Kristensen , responsible for military matters.
SX.O Mr. Mostfeldt, responsible for organisation.

APPENDIX B

A HISTORY OF SECTION D AND SOE's SCANDINAVIAN AND NORWEGIAN SECTIONS IN LONDON AND STOCKHOLM¹

Section D: April 1938 – August 1940

Scandinavian Section: formed September 1939.

Head of Section: Captain Ingram Fraser (D/G)

Lt. Commander Gerry Holdsworth RNVR (DG-1)

Norwegian section: formed late 1939 when Lt. James Chaworth-Musters RNVR was recruited. He became 'Temporary British Vice Consul' in Bergen between January and April 1940. Arrived back in Scotland on May 12 and continued his work with Section D under the reference D/G Mouse. At the end of 1939 Helmar Bonnevie was also recruited as Section D's agent in Norway, but references to him disappear to end after the German invasion in April 1940.

SOE's Scandinavian and Norwegian sections: August 1940 – January 1942

August 1940: Sir Charles Hambro was recruited to SOE from the MEW to head a new Scandinavian section, which included a Norwegian sub-section.

Summer 1940: the Norwegian section of Section D, which consisted of Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters and P.W.T. Boughton-Leigh, was the original basis for SOE's Norwegian sub-section. Lt. Colonel H. N. Sporborg also joined SOE from MEW and took over responsibility for Norway with Lt. Commander Frank Stagg as his principle adviser.

¹ Compiled from the following sources: PRO: paper entitled 'The Scandinavian Region – SOE', 18 September 1945 in HS2/12. HS7/190, The Stockholm Mission. HS8 files. FO371/29697 & FO371/29408. Documents and information from personal files of Captain H. J. Marks, E. M. Nielsen, G. O. Wiskeman, Lt. Col. J. S. Wilson, Lt. J. L. Chaworth-Musters RNVR, Lt. Commander F. N. Stagg RN, Major P. W. T. Boughton-Leigh, supplied by the SOE Adviser, Records and Historical Department, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London. M. Munthe, *How Sweet is War*. Sir Peter Tennant, 'Norwegian resistance: the Swedish connection', in Salmon, (ed.), *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 176-186.

December 1940 – October 1941: Lt. Colonel H.N. Spurborg was made head of the Scandinavian section in December 1940 and eventually Regional Head for Western Europe, which included Scandinavia, France, Belgium, and Holland, whilst Hambro was promoted to Regional Head (A/DA) with responsibility for Europe, West and North Africa, and propaganda. The Scandinavian section consisted of the sub-sections Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Whilst Spurborg was *de facto* head of the Scandinavian Section it was, however, George Wiskeman (S.5) head of both the Swedish and Finnish sub-sections, who acted as '*de jure* head'.

October 1941 – January 1942: George Wiskeman took over as head of the Scandinavian section from Lt. Colonel Spurborg, who remained Regional Head for Western Europe.

January 1942 – December 1942: the Scandinavian section was for the first time broken up and divided into Country Sections with Lt. Colonel John Skinner Wilson as head of the Norwegian section. Wiskeman continued to handle political and PWE contacts and as head of the Swedish section was responsible for the Stockholm Mission.

December 1942 – March 1943: General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall joined SOE on 19 October 1942 and in December was appointed head of a re-constituted Scandinavian region with responsibility for the different country sections until March 1943.

March 1943 – September 1943: the Scandinavian region was again broken up into separate country sections and Lt. Colonel Wilson continued as head of the Norwegian section.

September 1943 – May 1945: in September 1943 Wilson was appointed head of the Scandinavian region, a position he retained until the end of the war. He also retained direct responsibility for the Norwegian section.

THE STOCKHOLM MISSION

Spring – Summer 1940: with help from Peter Tennant the press attaché and Colonel Sutton-Pratt, the Military Attaché, Section D had

used the British Legation in Stockholm as a local base prior to the formation of SOE.

May 1940: Malcolm Munthe arrived in Stockholm. He had entered Norway from Sweden prior to the German invasion on 9 April 1940 to act, on behalf of MI (R), as a liaison officer with the Norwegian army in southern Norway. After several weeks he managed to flee across the border back into Sweden. He made contact with the British Legation and after the arrival of a telegram from London was appointed Assistant Military Attaché with the rank of Major, reporting to Colonel Sutton-Pratt.

October – November 1940: Sir Charles Hambro arrived from London and spent six weeks in Stockholm. Hambro set up a SOE Mission at the British Legation and appointed Munthe as SOE representative for Norway. His tasks were to recruit Norwegian volunteers, help people cross the border between Norway and Sweden, and to carry out special operations in occupied Norway.

July 1941: after carrying out a series of operations on behalf of SOE in Norway, including an apparent attempt to assassinate Heinrich Himmler during a visit to Oslo in January 1941, the Swedish authorities expelled Munthe.

Summer 1941: Munthe's work at the Stockholm Mission was from the end of July taken over by Captain H. J. Marks. Marks, a soldier in the Yorks and Lanes Regiment, had been involved in the fighting in Norway during the spring of 1940. He escaped to Sweden and in November 1940 was recruited to work on behalf of SOE. By early August 1941, however, the Swedish authorities had requested that Marks leave their country and through September the British Foreign Office also put pressure on SOE for Marks removal. About this time Andrew Croft arrived in Stockholm and took over from Munthe as Assistant Military Attaché.

Autumn 1941: Hugh Marks eventually left Sweden at the beginning of October. In September 1941, Victor Mallet, the British Minister in Sweden, had suggested that Edgar Nielsen should take over from Marks and handle SOE's work in Norway, but in a low-key and more

surreptitious manner. In mid-October Nielsen was given responsibility for SOE activity in Norway, but he was to act merely as a 'post-office', a conduit for information, so that the Legation would not be compromised.

December 1941: by this time, however, it appears that Edgar Nielsen, assisted by Anne Waring, had taken over full responsibility for SOE activity in Norway. In early 1943, Mrs Bernardes replaced Anne Waring, but Nielsen retained his responsibility for SOE's Norwegian section at the Stockholm Mission until the end of the war.

June 1942: the Stockholm Mission played a significant role in helping to instigate and eventually oversee on behalf of the Allies, the training of the Norwegian police troops in Norway. The friendship between Peter Tennant and Harry Södermann, head of the Swedish State Criminology Institute in Stockholm, led to a visit by Södermann to London in June 1942. During this trip he met Oscar Torp the Norwegian Minister of Defence, and Terje Wold, the Minister of Justice, who asked him about training Norwegian policemen in Sweden to take over in Norway after the war. On his return Södermann played an important role, in close contact with Tennant, in furthering the idea of preparing Norwegian military units in Sweden, under the cover of police training, to assist in the country's liberation.

January 1944: Peter Tennant was instructed to supervise liaison regarding the military training of Norwegian volunteers in Sweden.

December 1945: Major Henry Nyberg arrived in Stockholm to report on and watch over training of the Norwegian Police Troops under the cover of Assistant Military Attaché.

Spring 1945: Lt. Colonel Ram arrived in Stockholm also under the cover of Assistant Military Attaché to 'correlate' the working of the Norwegian Section at the British Legation, including 'Beefeater'.

End of July 1945: SOE Mission at the British Legation in Stockholm was closed down.

APPENDIX C

A HISTORY OF THE SHETLANDS BASE: AUTUMN 1939 – JULY 1945¹

Autumn 1939: Section D through Frank Carr, August Courthold and Gerald Holdsworth began to explore the possibility of using the Shetlands as a base from where equipment could be smuggled to Norway using fishing boats crewed by Norwegian fishermen. Nothing came of this.

April 1940: Section D re-considered employing Norwegian fishing vessels to establish a link with Norway, and from May and through the summer they were used to transport special operations teams, arms, and equipment to locations along the country's western seaboard.

August 1940: plans to create a permanent flotilla of Norwegian fishing vessels for use in operations to Norway began to evolve. During the month the Admiralty in agreement with the Norwegian Department of Trade took control of at least a dozen boats, which were then placed in the 'Small Vessels Pool' commanded by Admiral Preston.

September 1940: by early September an agreement had been reached with Admiral Preston that SIS and SOE could have the use of five or six of the twelve fishing vessels. Up until the spring of 1943, it was the Small Vessels Pool that allocated vessels to NID (C), the naval liaison section of SIS, for use on SOE operations out of the Shetlands.

October 1940: by this stage there were ongoing conversations between SO2, SIS, MI5 and the Admiralty concerning the establishment of a permanent naval base on the Shetlands from where these fishing boats could operate, agents and stores could be held prior to going to Norway, and where refugees could be received and interrogated. Toward the end of October, Captain L. H. Mitchell, a SIS officer, was approached and asked to become the base commander.

¹ Compiled from the following sources: PRO: HS2, HS7, and HS8 files. NHM: SOE archives. *Den Norske regjerings virksomhet: fra 9 April til 22 juni 1945, bind IV, forsvarsdepartementet*. Nøkleby, *Pass godt på Tirpitz*. Brooks, 'Britain and Norwegian resistance: clandestine sea transport', in Salmon, *Britain and Norway in the Second World War*, pp. 161-166. Howarth, *The Shetland Bus*. Sælen, *Shetlands Larsen*.

November 1940: by mid November Mitchell had arrived in the Shetlands to set up and take command of the base. The first operation to Norway departed on 10 November when three agents were transported to the Bergen area. A second operation followed on 22 December.

December 1940: by the end of the month the base was up and running, and Military Establishment no. 7 (ME 7) was the army unit made responsible for administering the site and victualling the boats. Throughout the war the base remained under the command of a British officer, whilst SOE operations that used the fishing vessels were carried out under the authority of the head of its Norwegian section, who issued the operational and sailing orders. There was, however, close liaison with ACOS, through the Naval Officer in Command (NOIC) at Lerwick. After discussions between Sir Charles Hambro and the Admiralty in February 1943 the base was also excluded from the control of the Deputy Director, Operations Division (Irregular) [DDOD (I)] at the Admiralty, who had responsibility for clandestine operations in home waters from that spring. Due to the large number of sea-borne operations to Norway from the Shetlands, the flotilla of fishing boats were, however, placed under the 'general control' of ACOS.

Spring 1941: Lt. Commander D.R. Howarth RNVR joined the base as second in command. Initially, operations were run from Lerwick with the agents accommodated at Flemington. In the summer of 1941, however, the operational base moved to Lunna Voe, thirty miles north of Lerwick.

July 1941: during the 1940/1941 season - (November-May) - it appears that only SOE used the fishing vessels at the base to send agents and stores to Norway. In July 1941, SIS set up its own base at Peterhead in Scotland, from where it operated until November 1943. This might have been the result of security concerns within SIS, although during the 1941/1942 it also sent eight operations to Norway using vessels from the Shetlands Base.

October 1941: by this stage, after the commencement of the second season of operations, the base still had only about six boats regularly available for use. In October, Captain (later Major) A.W. Sclater RM, better known under the pseudonym of A.W. Rogers, joined the base as adjutant. Norwegian naval uniforms were also purchased during the autumn for the Norwegian crews.

Early 1942: after Operation Anklet, the Lofoten raid in December 1941, the condition of the fishing boats at the Shetlands Base became a major issue. Charles Hambro eventually came to an agreement with ACOS that care and maintenance of the Shetlands flotilla was a naval responsibility and it was delegated to Lt. Commander Howarth RN, who employed Norwegian engineers and used local facilities. From late 1941, SOE began to reconnoitre a site at Burghead in Scotland as the possible location for an additional naval base.

March 1942: after the establishment of ANCC the Norwegian authorities in co-operation with SOE attempted to bring the Norwegian sailors at the base under Norwegian naval command. Lt. Commander Marstrander, and Captain F. K. M. Carver, were sent to the Shetlands to report on conditions at the base. In mid March, Marstrander recommended that the crews should be incorporated in the Royal Norwegian Navy and become the Norwegian Naval Independent Unit (NNIU). They would receive basic naval training and report to a Norwegian officer who would reside at the base and be responsible for their discipline. Lt. Commander Kleppe was appointed as the Norwegian commanding officer in early April, but this proved to be a disaster as the crews refused to accept both his disciplined approach and the proposal to incorporate the men into the Norwegian navy.

Summer 1942: eventually, after several weeks of discussions, an agreement was reached on the status of the Norwegian crews. Together they would continue to constitute NNIU and remain under the command of a Norwegian naval officer, Lt. Leif Hauge, who replaced Kleppe, and with Sub Lt. Eidsheim as the second Norwegian officer at the base. Ultimately the administration, discipline, and welfare of the unit was the responsibility of General Hansteen, the Norwegian Commander-in-Chief, but at this stage the men were not incorporated in the Norwegian Navy. The Norwegian officer was also responsible to the British officer in command of the base.

September 1942: at the beginning of the 1942/1943 season the Norwegian flotilla at the Shetlands Base consisted of ten fishing boats and four Arctic whalers that had been brought over from Iceland. The operational base also moved from Lunna Voe to Scalloway.

November 1942: Captain (later Major) A.W. Sclater took over command of the base from Mitchell, who returned to work for SIS. A subsidiary SOE base at Burghead also became operational at this time under the command of Captain H. J. Marks. Only five trips were, however, made from the base between November 1942 and January 1943, and of these only two were successful. Nonetheless, from 1 September 1943 it functioned as a transit camp for personnel and supplies and for training purposes under STS 26.

Winter 1942/43: during this season German defences became even more formidable and movements of the Norwegian fishing fleet were restricted. This made conditions along the Norwegian coast extremely dangerous and a total of six boats from the Shetlands Base, three of them the Arctic whalers, were lost as well as thirty-two men.

Summer 1943: with the assistance of OSS, Sir Charles Hambro approached Admiral Stark, Head of the US Naval Mission in London, and as a result the United States Navy provided three 110 foot Submarine Chasers for SOE/SO and SIS operations out of the Shetlands Base.

October 1943: on 26 October the Norwegian flag was raised on the three submarine chasers the 'Vigra', 'Hitra', and 'Hessa'. These boats replaced the fishing vessels and between November 1943 and May 1945, operating out of Lerwick, undertook 109 operations to Norway with no loss of life.

Summer 1944: working on the submarine chasers meant that the Norwegian crews were on the same level as the men that operated the MTBs.

Consequently, they were drafted into the Norwegian Navy and for the remainder of the war the NNIU was administered by *Sjøforsvarets Overkommando*, the Norwegian Naval High Command; as a result nine crew members resigned. At the same time Lt. H. Henriksen replaced Lt. Hauge as the Norwegian commanding officer at the base.

Summer 1945: the submarine chasers continued to operate up to and after the German surrender. The base was eventually closed down in mid-September 1945. Altogether forty-four men and eight boats were lost during operations from the Shetlands Base.

APPENDIX D

SOE *Coup de Main* Operations in Norway: 1940-1944

(Planned, Attempted, and Completed)¹

Date	Operation	Objectives	Details
March 1941	Arctic	The resurrection of an old MI (R) plan to sink a vessel alongside the quay at Narvik.	In December 1941, Churchill once again turned his attention to the export of Swedish iron-ore through Narvik. Consequently, Operation Arctic was reconsidered although ultimately never undertaken.
March 1941	Gertrude	A proposal to interdict the supply of sulphur from Norway to Germany.	During spring 1941 both this and 'Landlubber' led to Operation Maundy, the plan to use fishing vessels to lay mines in the Norwegian leads, (see Appendix E), and Operation Clairvoyant (see below).
March 1941	Landlubber	A proposal to interdict the supply of ferro-chrome from Norway to Germany.	
March 1941	Barbara	A plan to use a team recruited in Sweden by Malcolm Munthe to sabotage the railways around Trondheim.	
Preparations commenced in April 1941. Last reference in the ANCC minutes at end of 1942	Clairvoyant	Initially: Tyssedal, Rjukan (including nitrate factories), Bjølvfoss, Høyanger, Saude and Stangfjord hydroelectric power stations, and the Tinnsjø ferries.	A team of eight men was recruited in Sweden and in early March 1941 picked up from the Norwegian coast by fishing vessel. They were trained in the UK and returned to Norway. Two groups of three eventually remained in Norway to carry out the sabotage; the other two men returned to the UK. On the night of 17/18 April one group managed to attack the Trondheim-Storlien railway line and the carriage of one train was damaged as it went through a tunnel. All six men fled to Sweden where eventually they were arrested.
June 1941	Burnous	The first of many plans to attack the Orkla pyrite mines at Løkken near Trondheim.	An ambitious plan to attack the major hydroelectric sites and ferries in southern Norway in order to disrupt the manufacture of specialist metals, predominately aluminium. Also included a plan to bomb Rjukan to stop the production of heavy water. After it failed to obtain the required aircraft and because of objections from the Norwegian authorities, the plan was scaled down to a projected attack against Høyanger. One sortie was made but failed due to bad weather, and then members of the party were badly injured in a car crash. Nevertheless, it continued to be resurrected at least until the end of 1942.
			Stores and personnel were available in the area and intelligence collected but at the end of August 1941, the MEW told SOE that the plant needed to be put out of action for several months if an attack was to be

¹ Compiled from the following sources: PRO: HS2, HS7, HS8, DEFE2, PREM3, CAB files. NHM: SOE archive. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*. Dahl, *Heavy Water and the Wartime Race for Nuclear Energy*.

By Autumn 1941, SOE had already begun to consider an operation against this site	Alfriston	Knaben molybdenum mines near Fjotland, approximately sixty miles inland from the southern tip of Norway.	worthwhile. This led SOE to concentrate on disrupting the transportation of pyrites from the mine to Germany. Molybdenum was considered to be the most important war material that Germany obtained from Norway and therefore SOE, COHQ and RAF all showed interest in this site. It was eventually left to the RAF and USAAF, who launched attacks against the target in March and October 1943, and again in 1944.
January 1941 (Air)	Woodcock	Proposed attack against Sola Airfield outside Stavanger.	The Air Ministry requested SOE to consider an attack against the Focke Wolfe aircraft and other heavy bombers. One unsuccessful sortie was made on the night of 3-4 May after which the operation was postponed and it does not appear to have ever been resurrected.
17 April 1942 (Sea)	Redshank (P. Deinboll, P. Getz, T. Grong)	The Baardshaug converter and transformer station which controlled power to the railway between the Orkla pyrite mine and the port of Thamshavn.	Successfully attacked on 4 May 1942. The transformer station was totally destroyed, which reduced the transport capacity of the line by 50% for six months. Nevertheless, production at the mine was still 468,640 tons in 1942, only slightly down on the previous year. All escaped to Sweden.
June 1942	Seagull I (Lt. Eskeland, 2. Lt. Skog, Sgt. Blindheim, J. Baalsrud, Sgt. Hanssen)	The disruption of supplies of blister copper, pyrites and zinc concentrate produced at the Sulitjelma mines in northern Norway through attacking Fagerli power station.	The original outline project was submitted for approval on 28 June. Postponed in October 1942 after Operation Musketoon led to an increase in security in the area and at the Sulitjelma plant.
16 September 1942	Kestral (Lt. P. Getz, Sgt. T. Grong, Cpl. L. Brønn)	Fosdalen iron ore mines in north Trøndelag.	This plant had received machinery from Germany and 'full support for an increased rate of production'. It was successfully attacked on 5 October and production was reduced by 25% for two months. The party escaped to Sweden
8 November 1942	Marshfield (Lt. F. Normann, Sgt. K. Hennum)	Rødsand iron ore mines north of Åndalsnes.	First attempted in October. Eventually sailed on 8 November but the team disappeared after landing on the Møre coastline on 10 November 1942.
5 February 1943	Seagull II (Lt. P. Getz, Lt. T. Skog, Sgt H. Hanssen, Sgt T. Grong, Pte. S. Granlund, Gnr. E. Eriksen)	Sulitjelma mines.	Resurrected in December 1942. Party of six departed in the submarine <i>Uredd</i> on 5 February 1943 from Lunna Voe. The party never reached Norway. After the war it was discovered that the vessel had sailed into a German minefield close to Bodø.
6 February 1943	Granard (Lt. P. Deinboll, 2.Lt. Bjørn Pedersen, O. Sættem)	Attack and destroy the loading tower, and sink a laden pyrites cargo vessel at the outer end of Thamshavn pier in order to dislocate the transport of sulphur	Party sailed on 6 December 1942 and landed on the Norwegian coast two days later. It was six weeks before a German vessel of sufficient size came alongside the pier. On 25 February limpet mines were placed on the S.S. <i>Nordfart</i> . Two holes were blown in the ship, which was then run aground. It only took a few months, however, before the ship

16 February 1943	Gunnerside (J. Rønneberg, K. Haukelid, K. Idland, F. Kayser, H. Storhaug, B. Strømsheim)	pyrites from the Orkla mines. The storage and production plant for heavy water at Vemork so that present stocks and fluids in the course of production would be destroyed.	was again in service, and therefore the operation had little long-term impact. A first attempt to drop the team was made on 23 January, but it was the night of 16-17 February before it successfully landed in Norway. On 23 February it joined up with the 'Swallow' group. The attack was carried out on the night of 27-28 February. The high concentration cells and 500 kilograms of heavy water were destroyed. New high concentration equipment was, however, brought from the Norsk Hydro sites at Notodden and S��heim and 100 kg of heavy water brought back from Germany. Consequently, production recommenced only a few weeks later. Five of the party crossed to Sweden, whilst Haukelid remained in Norway.
February 1943	Midhurst	Proposed attack against the <i>frostfilet</i> factories in Hammerfest and Melb��.	The operation was abandoned in March 1943 owing to a number of local operational difficulties. Part of the operation was at one stage offered to OSS.
January 1943 (Air)	Chaffinch (T. Stenersen, O. Sandersen, M. Olsen)	One of the tasks of this three man party was to investigate the possibility of destroying enemy shipping in the Oslo and Drammen area.	The party took limpet mines with them to Norway and initially considered attacking shipping in Horten. On 19 May, however, the group attached a limpet mine to the <i>Sanev</i> whilst in dock at Moss. The boat sank the same day. A later attempt to attack shipping in Oslo harbour was abandoned. The party left Norway at the end of May.
12 March 1943 (Air)	Mardonius (Max Manus, Gregers Gram)	To attack merchant shipping in Oslo fjord by means of limpet mines placed by single operators working from canoes. Local volunteers were to be trained.	The party made a number of contacts, including Sigurd Jacobsen from Milorg, who on 27-28 April helped them place limpets on several ships. The <i>Ortelsburg</i> was sunk, the <i>Tugela</i> and an Oil Lighter badly damaged, and a harbour beacon destroyed. The team withdrew to Sweden on 4 May.
11 October 1943 (Air)	Bundle (M. Manus, G. Gram, E. Juden, C. Viborg)	To sink enemy shipping in Oslo Harbour and North Oslo fjord, with particular reference to enemy troop ships.	Milorg's leadership was eventually made aware of this operation and agreed to arrange a supply of shipping intelligence. In early January Manus arrived in Stockholm to try and get authority to develop and use 'baby' torpedoes, but without success. In February 1944, 'Bundle' sank a German patrol vessel, but from this point on the team took on the additional responsibility of propaganda under the title 'Derby'. Manus and Gram also began to work with the other NIC (1) teams in the Oslo area, and became part of the 'Oslo Detachment' under S��nsteby. Ship sabotage was not, however, abandoned and in June 1944 six limpet mines were placed on the <i>Monte Rosa</i> but failed to cause major damage. In August a German destroyer was attacked using a home-made torpedo and in January 1945 limpet mines were placed on the <i>Donau</i> and <i>Rolandsech</i> damaging both.

10 October 1943 (Air)	Feather I (P. Deinboll, O. Nilssen, A. Wisløff, L. Brønn, T. Bjørnaas, P. Skjærpe, A. Hægstad)	To stop production at the Orkla pyrite mines by destroying the lift machinery in the lift shaft. If this proved to be too difficult they should attack the railway between Orkanger to Thamshavn.	On 30 October a co-ordinated attack was carried out against the locomotives at Løkken, Thamshavn and Orkanger, which transported the materials from the mine to the point of shipment on the coast. Five locomotives were destroyed or put out of action. A further attack was carried out on 17 November and a rail car blown up. One of the team was killed, one captured, whilst the remaining men eventually escaped to Sweden.
17 November 1943 (Air)	Goldfinch (T. Stenersen, J.Allan, M. Olsen, O. Sandersen)	This was a continuation of the 'Chaffinch' operation and one of its tasks was to attack shipping on the west side of Oslo fjord.	Two operations were planned. In February 1944 the 'Goldfinch' team waited at Skien in readiness to attack the ship that was to transport the residues of heavy water from Vemork to Germany. It was never required. The second attack was to be against the M/S <i>Lappland</i> in Drammen at the beginning of May, but the ship sailed before the team was ready.
12 November 1943 (Air)	Company (E. Tallaksen, B. Rasmussen, A. Trønnes)	To destroy the transformers at Arendal Smelteverk at Eydehavn near Arendal in southern Norway, which produced 4000 tons of ferro-silicon yearly, all of which went to Germany.	The plant was attacked on 21 November and production was stopped for six months costing the Germans 2500 tons of ferro – silicon.
April 1944	'Swallow' and Milorg: the train ferry 'Hydro'.	A plan approved in February 1944, to stop the transportation of the remaining heavy water from Vemork to Germany by sinking the ferry carrying it across Lake Tinnsjø.	On the night of 19 February an explosive charge was placed on the ferry 'Hydro' by Knut Haukelid, Knut Lier-Hansen from Milorg, and Rolf Sørli from B-org. The charge, 19 pounds of plastic explosive, went off the following morning as the ferry was crossing the lake, resulting in the loss of 500 kilos of 100% heavy water and 14 Norwegian civilians. Four drums did, however, survive, and this along with a small amount of heavy water from Såheim, was shipped to Germany during the spring.
April 1944 (Stockholm)	Feather II (A. Hægstad, T. Bjørnaas, A. Wisløff)	To destroy the remaining electric locomotive on the Thamshavn railway.	The team of three entered from Sweden on 21 April. On 9 May they blew up the locomotive and on 1 June the railway's last railcar was also destroyed. One of the locomotives had been sent to Oslo for repairs, but on 13 September this was attacked and damaged by the 'Oslo Detachment' under Gunnar Sønsteby.
17 April 1944 (Sea)	Albatross (L. Skjöld, P. Wegeland)	The aluminium plant at Saudasjøen was to be reconnoitred with a view to a possible future attack.	When production stopped at the plant due to lack of raw material, the plan was abandoned.
August 1944	Docklow (A. Hægstad, T. Bjørnaas, A. Wisløff)	To stop the export of pyrites and ores from the Sulitjelma mines by attacking the locomotives servicing the Sandnes to	The 'Feather II' team left Stockholm for the field on 15 August, but was quickly arrested by the Swedish authorities. On 3 September they made a second attempt, but on 11 September they were recalled after it became known that the transport of materials had

August/September 1944 (Stockholm – Air)	Dodworth (E. Sundseth)	Skjønslua railway or by attacking the tug boats moving between Skjønslua and Finneid. Another attack on the Orkla pyrite mines.	ceased. On August 21, Sundseth was sent from Sweden to reconnoitre the area in readiness to receive a party that would be sent in from the UK. He returned on 6 September. On September 26 the Orkla attack was cancelled owing to the strong defences and a change in the general situation.
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APPENDIX E

Sea-Borne Operations Instigated by or Involving SOE along the Norwegian Seaboard 1940-1945¹

Date	Operation	Objectives	Details
Autumn 1940	Mandible (formerly 'Castle')	To interrupt the supply of ilmenite from the A/S Titania mine at Sokndal by destroying the hydroelectric power station and loading appliances at the head of Jøssingfjord.	SOE had shown interest in this site as early as August 1940. From October, COHQ began to plan a raid against the target using a force that included three destroyers, 150 Special Service troops, and Norwegian interpreters supplied by SOE. Ilmenite was considered to be a product of some importance, although it was pointed out that there were eleven months stocks in Germany. The raid would also provide practical experience, annoy the Germans, and encourage Norwegians. The operation was eventually cancelled on the instructions of Churchill.
March 1941	Almoner	The Norwegian herring fleet in the North Sea	This was a plan to attack the Norwegian herring fleet working between Haugesund and Egersund. SOE would provide Norwegian seamen who would operate as armed guards. The COS approved it in principle, but by mid-March it had been cancelled at the request of the Norwegian government.
4 March 1941	Claymore	The destruction of herring and cod oil plants on the Lofoten Islands, the arrest of local Quislings and enemy personnel, and the securing of volunteers for the Norwegian navy.	Planned, organised, and executed under the direction of COHQ in consultation with SOE. The operation included five destroyers, 500 Commandoes from the Special Service Brigade, and through SOE, fifty-two Norwegian men and officers were supplied along with guides and naval pilots. Altogether, eleven ships were sunk, factories and 800,000 gallons of oil destroyed, 213 enemy personnel captured, and 314 Norwegian volunteers brought back to UK. Important Enigma equipment was also captured.
April 1941	Maundy I	Enemy shipping in the Norwegian leads.	By early March 1940, SOE had a mining squad in training and on 29 April 1940, the first Norwegian fishing boat left the Shetlands to lay mines in the inner leads. Eventually eleven out of eighteen 'R-Type' mines provided by the Royal Navy were laid in Norwegian coastal waters.

¹ Compiled from the following sources: PRO: HS2, HS7, HS8, DEFE2, PREM3, ADM, and CAB files. NHM: SOE and FO IV archives.

April 1941	Hemisphere	Attack against a herring oil plant at Øksfjord in northern Norway.	The operation, conceived by Commander Frank Stagg of SOE, and consisting of ten Norwegian marines and one SOE agent, sailed on 8 April 1941. The plant was completely destroyed and the expedition returned to the UK on 15 April.
Spring 1941	Wallah	To establish a base in northern Norway from where operations could be launched with the aim of paralysing German sea-borne traffic along the Norwegian coast.	By the end of July 1941 the Admiralty had approved 'Wallah'. The Norwegian Naval Staff and <i>Nortraship</i> , which provided a ship the <i>SS-Anderson</i> as a base for the operation, were both involved. The Admiralty also provided two 'Q' ships, heavily armed merchant vessels, which would be used to intercept German shipping. Local fishing boats would also be purchased and used to sail into harbours where explosives would be attached to enemy vessels. The possibility of using ski-troops to attack targets inland was also considered. In October 1940 the operation was placed under ACOS, and in November under the C-in-C Home Fleet before it was eventually merged into 'Anklet'.
October 1941	Maundy II	To drop 'R-mines' in coastal waters north of Kristiansund.	The fishing boat M/V <i>Nordsjøen</i> left the Shetlands on 19 October skippered by Leif Larsen and with nine men and forty-two 'R-mines' on board. The mines were laid on 21 October but the boat encountered a major storm and had to be abandoned. All the men eventually got back to Britain, including a group of seven led by Larsen in the fishing boat 'Arthur'.
December 1941	Kitbag I	German controlled shipping, cold storage plants, fish canning factories, herring oil factory, oil tanks, the capture of Quislings, and the recruiting of Norwegian volunteers at Florø.	The force included approximately 250 men and officers from 6 th Commando and thirty Norwegian men and officers provided by SOE under the leadership of Martin Linge. It eventually got underway on 11 December, but was abandoned after reaching the Norwegian coast.
December 1941	Archery	A raid on military and economic targets in the vicinity of Vågsøy with the objective of harassing the coastal defences of SW Norway and diverting enemy attention away from Operation Anklet.	Included almost 600 men and officers from No 3 and No 2 Commando plus six naval pilots and thirty-three Norwegian men and officers, including guides, provided by SOE and under the command of Martin Linge. The force sailed on 26 December and arrived off the Norwegian coast the following day. The RAF supported the British naval forces and a number of economic targets were destroyed.
December 1941	Anklet	The object was to cut enemy communications with the north of Norway. This evolved into an	Under the command of the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet, a large naval and military force, including 300 men from No 12 Command, sailed on 22 December and arrived in the area

		operation whereby a temporary defensive base would be established on the Lofoten Islands from where light naval forces could operate against German sea communications. The Norwegian fish industry was also a target.	on 26 December. The Norwegian navy provided two corvettes and over sixty naval ratings. A SOE contingent of seventy-seven men and officers also sailed with the main force. They were instructed to seize five local fishing boats and attack navigation lights along the Norwegian coast, whilst W/T operators aided communication and supplied intelligence. Three fishing boats also sailed from the Shetlands to attack navigation lights in the area, although only one completed its task. The expedition withdrew on 28 December. Some local targets were destroyed and 266 Norwegians brought back, but little else was achieved.
January 1942	Kitbag II	To attack targets around Florø.	The naval force, which sailed in early January, included five Norwegian naval pilots supplied through SOE. A cargo ship and two trawlers were attacked before the force withdrew
Jan/Feb 1942	Q-Ships Operation	The Q-ships intended for Operation Wallah were taken over by C-in-C Home fleet to be used against enemy shipping.	The operation sailed from the Shetlands on 29 January but returned to Scapa Flow on 5 February after being spotted by enemy aircraft. SOE supplied intelligence, one officer, eight army and naval ranks, arms, and explosives.
February 1942	Lark (Maundy) (O.K. Sættem, A. Christiansen)	To lay mines in the inner leads around Trondheim.	The plan was to send 'R-mines' with the Lark team to Norway and use rowing boats to lay the mines. It was never carried out.
October 1942	Title (L. Larsen, P. Bjørnøy, R. Strand, J. Kalve)	This was a joint FOS/SOE operation. The plan was that a fishing boat would tow two submersible 'Chariots' and carry six Naval personnel into Trondheimsfjord, where the attack against the Tirpitz would be launched.	The fishing boat 'Arthur' sailed on 26 October and arrived off the Norwegian coast on 29 October. The following day, in heavy seas, the two 'Chariots' were lost. The fishing boat was scuttled and the crew and naval personnel attempted to escape to Sweden. All except one got back safely.
January 1943	Carhampton	The objective was to board and capture a convoy of merchant ships off the southern coastline of Norway and bring them back to the UK. The party was made up of 41 men, 15 from NIC (1) and 26 from the RNN.	Attempts to sail were made in November but abandoned due to bad weather. The operation was then delayed until Operation Cabaret had been completed. It eventually left on 1 January 1943 in the Norwegian whale-catcher, the 'Bødø', which hit a mine on the way back and sank with the loss of thirty-three lives. Two attempts to capture ships were made in January but both failed and the party was forced to flee to the mountains. It was then decided that the group would assist Operation Yorker, a COHQ attack against the titanium mines in Sogndal, but this was cancelled due to bad weather. Consequently, the party had to make their own way back. Sixteen captured the coastal steamer,

September 1943	Vestige 1 (Harald Svindseth, Ragnar Ulstein, Nils Fjeld)	The objective of the 'Vestige' operations was to attack enemy shipping along the coast between Bergen and Ålesund. Kayaks would be used to get close to the vessel and limpet mines then attached to the ship's hull.	'Tromøysund', which was sunk in the North Sea, nineteen escaped to the UK in a fishing boat, two fled to Sweden, whilst four men remained in the country. Landed on 3 September by MTB and on the night of 23 September attacked the <i>Hermut</i> in Gulen fjord, north of Bergen. The ship was grounded. The party was picked up by MTB on 16 November.
September 1943	Vestige II (L. Olsen, I Næss)		Also landed on 3 September by MTB. Attempted an attack in Askvoll harbour but hampered by adverse weather. They moved to Ålesund and made contact with the 'Antrum' operation. Picked up 17 November by sub chaser as part of a SIS operation.
September 1943	Vestige III (S. Synnes, H. Hoel)		Also landed by MTB on 3 September and on 6 October attacked the <i>Jantje Fritzen</i> in Ålesund using 6 limpets. The ship was, however, kept afloat and towed to Bergen for repairs. Picked up along with 'Vestige II'.
October 1943	Chariot operation (Karl Vilnes)	The aim was to attack shipping in Askvoll harbour.	An observer, Vilnes, was landed on Atløy, north of Bergen, to report the movements of shipping in Askvoll harbour to a nearby MTB that was carrying 'Chariots'. Owing to the absence of shipping nothing happened.
November 1943	Barbara I (Lt. C. Johnsen, Lt. B. Pedersen, Lt. B. Marris RNVR, Lt. J. Holmes, RN)	The object of the 'Barbara' operations was to sink enemy shipping in Norwegian coastal waters using 'Welmans', the one-man submersible craft.	On 20 November 4 'Welmans' and 2 British and 2 Norwegian officers were transported to the west coast with the intention of sinking shipping or the floating dock in Bergen harbour. The 'Welmans' penetrated the inner harbour but the lead vessel was discovered and 2 nd Lieutenant Pedersen captured. The other officers escaped after sinking their vessels and were eventually picked up on 5 February 1944.
December 1943	Barbara II The remaining Norwegians trained for Welman operations were: 2. Lt. R. Larsen, Sgt. Ø. Hansen, Cpl. N. Olsen, Sgt. F. Kayser, Sgt. J. Akslen	The aim was to attack the anchorage at Askvoll.	A SOE observer was landed on the island of Atløy, and a second attempt was made to land another two observers further south. At the end of January 1944, however, after the operation had failed to get underway, both sets of observers were picked up and the operation abandoned.
February 1944	Barbara III (Trace) (Harald	The aim was to attack shipping in	An advanced party, 'Trace', was landed on 6 February 1944 and began sending

	Svindseth, Ragnar Ulstein)	Gulenfjord.	messages by W/T. The 'Welman' party sailed on 13 February but was forced back by bad weather. The operation was eventually abandoned although the 'Trace' party continued to send messages until it was picked-up on 16 March by sub-chaser.
Feb/March 1944	Barbara IV	The aim was to attack shipping in Syvdefjord.	Th aim was to supply intelligence using the 'Antrum Green' station in Ålesund, but the operation never took place.
March 1944	Vestige IV (K. Idsand, A. Åkre, K. Endresen)	To attack shipping around Egersund using limpet mines.	The party initially failed to carry out any attacks, although later attempts were made against U-boats but with no success and a small vessel was sunk in Flekkefjord harbour. The party, however, remained in the field for the rest of the war. In early 1945, it was issued with new operation instructions and carried out acts of sabotage against German military camps in the area.
March 1944	Vestige XII (A. Torkildsen, A. Gade-Torp, F. Brandt)	To attack shipping at Malm in North-Trøndelag.	On 16 March a sub-chaser landed the party equipped with folding boats rather than kayaks. Conditions were so difficult that the party were eventually forced to flee to Sweden without carrying out any attacks.
March 1944	Vestige V (K. Vilnes, P. Ørstenvik)	To attack shipping loading pyrites at Sagvåg on the island of Stord.	A sub-chaser dropped the party on 31 March 1944. Several attempts were made to attack shipping but weather difficulties again proved insurmountable and a sub-chaser recovered the party on 9 May. There were plans to revive 'Vestige V' in August 1944 but due to objections from SIS these were abandoned.
March 1944	Vestige XIV (R. Larsen, Ø. Hansen, B. Petersen)	To attack shipping in Frederickstad and other Østfold (eastern Norway) ports.	The party was dropped by air on 31 March with folding boats and diving suits. On the way to carrying out an attack the party was surprised and after an exchange of shots fled to Sweden. Although the party returned to the field at a later stage no attacks were undertaken.
April 1944	Vestige VIII (H. Hoel, I. Næss)	An operation to attack shipping in Söderfjord.	A sub-chaser landed the party at Skorpen on 12 April, but it failed to carry out any attacks due to the weather and short nights and was picked up on 1 May.
April 1944	Maundy III/Dundee	The party was instructed to lay mines north of Florø. Alternative targets were limpet attacks on shipping in Gulenfjord, the introduction of explosive charges into cases of salt herrings, or sabotage of the	Despite four attempts, the first one on 16 April, bad weather and poor conditions meant that the operation never took place.

September 1944	Salamander I (R. Ulstein) (The 'Salamander' operations would use the 'Sleeping Beauty' – motorised submersible canoe)	automatic navigation lights in the fjord. To introduce a party of four men to attack shipping in the Nordgulen and Florø area using the 'Sleeping Beauty'.	SIS objected to the operation because it believed it threatened its 'Roska' station near Florø.
September 1944	Salamander II (F. Kayser, S. Synnes, A. Trønnes, K. Karlsen)	To attack depot ships, U-boats, and other vessels around Måløy using limpet mines.	Landed by sub-chaser on 9 September but returned on 18 September with no success.
September 1944	Salamander III	Target U-boat depot ships, U-boats, and other shipping in Søvdefjord using limpet mines.	SIS objected to the operation because of its station 'Frey' based at Guskøy south of Ålesund.
September 1944	Salamander IV	Target U-boat depot ships and U-boats at Hatvik using limpet mines.	SIS objected to this operation because of its 'Reva' station near Bergen, but it was eventually cancelled because SOE agent in the area reported that the U-boat depot ship and U-boats were no longer at Hatvik.
September 1944	Salamander V (T. Lien, A. Fløisand, L. Olsen, I. Tønseth)	To attack workshop ships for U-boats, U-boats and other shipping at Vingvågen near Trondheim.	Left by fishing boat with two 'Sleeping Beauties' on 13 September. Returned on 30 September with no success.
Autumn 1944	Cutlass (H. Ryen, Cpl. Ratvik, seaman Ingebritsen)	A plan to intercept a prison ship and release the thirty members of the resistance that were onboard. They were from the Narvik area and were being transferred via Trondheim to a concentration camp.	Four MTBs would intercept the ship south of Rørvik. SOE agents would also go on board at Sandnesjøen to assist or to force the ship to sail for the UK if this failed. The operation was never carried out.

APPENDIX F

SOE Long Term and Miscellaneous Operations in Norway 1940-1945¹

DATE	OPERATION	OBJECTIVES	DETAILS
10 Nov 1940 (sea)	Unnamed (M. Rasmussen, K.A. Lindberg, F. Pedersen Kviljo)	Contact resistance groups in Bergen and establish a W/T link with southern Norway.	The Abwehr had infiltrated the crew of the fishing boat <i>Urd II</i> and all three SOE men were arrested after their arrival in Norway. They were executed in August 1941.
23 Jan 1941 (submarine)	Cheese I (O. Starheim)	Contact resistance groups in southern Norway, collect intelligence, reconnoitre sabotage targets.	Starheim made contact with local groups and through Lt. Pål Frisvold, the central leadership of Milorg. He also sent back a significant volume of intelligence, before returning to Britain in July 1941.
15 Sept. 1941 (sea)	Letterbox (K.J. Aarsæther, A. Wisløff)	To arrange weapons dumps, contact local resistance groups, and commence instruction in the mountains near Ålesund. Wisløff would try and get work at Trondheim submarine base.	Both men returned early in November after making contact with groups around Ålesund.
15 October 1941 (sea)	Arquebus (S. Andersen, B. Haarvardsholm)	To organise resistance groups in the Haugesund area, establish W/T contact, and investigate the possibility of importing explosives to attack the aluminium plant at Saudasjøen north of Stavanger.	Haarvardsholm was lost whilst returning to the UK on the <i>Bliia</i> in November, but Andersen remained in Norway for the rest of the war. The radio was damaged and therefore contact was made in April 1942 through SIS station, 'Theta'. A new radio was eventually sent from Stockholm in October 1942 and contact established. Relations with Milorg were problematic until 1944 and the arrival of the 'Albatross' team.
5/6 Dec. 1941 (sea)	Antrum (F. Aaraas, K.J. Aarsæther, K. Aarsæther)	Set up W/T contact and develop groups in the Ålesund area.	Aaras trained a local radio operator and returned to the UK in January 1942. K. J. Aarsæther also returned in January and was replaced by his brother Knut, who returned to the UK in March. Radio contact with the area was problematic and by early 1943 had broken down.
13 Dec. 1941 (sea)	Archer (I. Fosseide, B. Mathiesen, Lynghaul, R. Aarkvisla)	To organise a local intelligence service, reconnoitre possible sabotage targets, recruit and train local groups, establish radio contact.	In the short-term this operation was linked to Operation Anklet, in the longer-term it was the first of a series of operations sent into Nordland to establish a guerrilla organisation. The group, however, never established radio contact and internal conflict between its members made it ineffective.

¹ This information is compiled from the following sources: PRO: HS2, HS7, and HS8 files. NHM: SOE and FO IV archives. Kjelstadli, *Hjemmestyrkene*. Jensen, [et al], *Kompani Linge*, Birkenes, *Milorg i D17: Nedre Telemark*. Berg & Lindhjem, *Militær motstand i Rogaland og Vestfold*, Welle-Strand, *Vi vil verne vårt land*, Pedersen, *Militær motstand i nord 1940-1945*.

DATE	OPERATION	OBJECTIVES	DETAILS
2 January 1942 (air)	Cheese II (O. Starheim, A. Fasting)	To organise and instruct guerrilla bands in the Flekkefjord to Kristiansand area and receive arms.	Fasting carried out instruction whilst Starheim travelled to Oslo in January and met members of the central council of Milorg, including Rolf Palmstrøm the head of communications, who asked for a wireless operator and set. It was agreed that Einar Skinnerland should travel to Britain to organise this, which he did along with the two SOE men on the 'Galtesund' in March. Three W/T sets were left behind for use by a local organisation under Gunvald Thomstad.
5 February 1942 (Sea)	Crow (E. N. Stenersen, the organiser, and E. K. Jacobsen the W/T operator, who followed on 27/3/42)	To establish W/T contact and organise guerrilla groups on the eastern side of Oslo fjord.	Stenersen went in first and made contact with the local Milorg organisation and also with SL, which asked him to make his radio available. He found a sight for the W/T operator and in May fled to Stockholm. Jacobsen came on air the same month, but in July was taken by the Gestapo, who attempted to work his set. He escaped in December 1942.
5 February 1942 (sea)	Anvil (J. Gunleiksrud, the organiser, and W/T operator F. B. Johnsen, who followed on 12 March)	To establish W/T contact and organise guerrilla groups around Lillehammer.	Gunleiksrud was arrested on arrival in February by the local Milorg organisation on suspicion of being a provocateur. He also came into conflict with SL in Oslo. He left for Sweden in July. The W/T operator remained in Norway until the end of the war.
8 February 1942 (sea)	Lark (Odd Sørli, A. Pevik, followed by O.K. Sættem and A. Christiansen [instructors] on 8 April. E. Hansen [W/T], H. Nygaard [organiser] sailed on 18 April).	To establish radio contact, receive weapons, and train and build up guerrilla groups in the area around Trondheim. Possible sabotage targets, such as submarine supply ships, would also be reconnoitred.	Sørli and Pevik made contact with groups in the Trondheim area. They were followed by the instructors and then the W/T operator and organiser in April 1942. Nygaard took over from Sørli. Radio communication began in late May but contact was problematic during the summer. The W/T operator, Hansen, who had gone to Stockholm, was forced to return to Trondheim in autumn 1942 to help improve matters. His set was D/F d and on 16 December 1942 Nygaard and Hansen were arrested, although Nygaard escaped. This temporarily ended radio contact with the Trondheim area.
21 February 1942 (sea)	Anchor (T. Gulbrandsen, and E. Hvaal, the W/T operator who followed 17 April)	To establish W/T contact, instruct small groups in guerrilla warfare, and prepare to receive arms drops in the area around Drammen, west of Oslo.	Gulbrandsen made contact with the leadership of Milorg in eastern Norway. He began instruction but in May was captured by the Gestapo. Hval was also captured soon after his arrival in Norway in April. Gulbrandsen escaped, with the help of the Gestapo in September and returned to Britain to work for the Germans: see below, Operation Omelette.
5 March 1942 (sea)	Heron I (A. Knudsen, O. Baarnes, H. Bugge. H. K. Hansen, A. Larsen, W/T operator)	Follow up to the 'Archer' party. The second of three parties that would organise and train a guerrilla force in the Vefsn district south of Mosjøen, receive arms dumps, and establish W/T contact.	See below: Heron II
28 March	Grouse	Skinnerland, who was originally	Skinnerland was dropped on the night of 28-

1942 (air)	(E. Skinnerland, organiser)	sent to Britain by R. Palmstrøm the head of signals in Milorg, was dropped in the county of Telemark to establish W/T contact and prepare the ground for the main 'Grouse' party, which was due to arrive at the end of April. The aim was to build an independent guerrilla organisation in the Telemark/Rjukan area.	29 March. He was instructed to deliver arms to Milorg and advise them that the organisation in Telemark would operate independently. Skinnerland made contact with SL during June 1942. The second 'Grouse' party, under Jens Poulsson was unable to leave Britain before the lighter nights began to take effect in May.
7 April 1942 (sea)	Mallard (E. Marthinsson & C. F. Aall)	The objective was to establish W/T contact and a guerrilla organisation in the area just to the north of Bergen. Great care would be used in approaching Milorg.	The two men attempted to make contact with Milorg in Bergen, which eventually they managed to do. On 30 May however, owing to information provided locally, the Gestapo captured the two SOE men and along with E. Hvaal they were shot. The arrest of the 'Mallard', 'Penguin', and 'Anchor' agents (see below) led to a series of arrests in the Bergen area and severely damaged local resistance groups.
8 April 1942 (sea)	Heron II (B. Sjøberg, E. Rustan, L. Langaas, R.M. Olsen, J. Kvarme, A. Gundersen)	Birger Sjøberg took over command of the 15-man party in the Vefsn district.	A considerable amount of weapons were imported into the area and the training of local groups began. Early in September 1942, however, owing to the work of a Norwegian agent, one of the 'Archer' group was arrested and led the Germans to a farm on Lake Majavatn where a SOE team was in hiding. An exchange of shots followed, which resulted in the death of two Germans. This contributed to a decision to declare a state of emergency in the area, the execution of thirty-four Norwegians, and the break up of the Archer/Heron operation.
17 April 1942 (sea)	Penguin (A. Værum organiser)	Sailed on the <i>Olaf</i> on 17 April with the 'Anchor' W/T operator E. Hvaal. Værum was instructed to work in the Haugesund to Egersund area, including Stavanger, organise local groups, and consider sabotage of certain targets, including Sola aerodrome.	Landed at Nesvik near Televåg on the island of Sotra outside Bergen on 21 April. Both 'Penguin' and 'Anchor' stayed with a contact man in Televåg. On 26 April, six Germans and two Stapo men arrived at the agent's hideout and a shootout followed in which two Germans were killed. Værum was also killed whilst Hvaal was taken prisoner, tortured and later shot. As a result of this incident all the houses in Televåg were burnt down, all men between 16 and 65 sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Germany, whilst the rest of the inhabitants were banished and interned in Norway.
28 April 1942 (air)	Cockerel (T. Hugo van der Hagen, E. Jensen)	To carry out instruction and training in the Kristiansand area.	In August 1941, Jensen left for Sweden followed by Hagen, who became part of Operation Carhampton in early 1943. After this operation was abandoned he stayed behind in southern Norway to help F. Aaraas operate the 'Carhampton' W/T station. Aaraas was captured on 12 August 1943 but Hagen managed to escape.
18 April 1942 (Air)	Raven (W. Waage, L. Pettersen, C. Tønseth, G. Merkesdal, W/T operator)	To form guerrilla forces of approximately 300 men in the mountains around Voss and establish wireless contact with the UK. Tasks on an Allied invasion would be to block the Oslo-Bergen railway and control	'Raven' soon came on air and transmitted until July, after which contact became problematic. In October 1942, Waage arrived in Stockholm and was sent back to the UK. Waage eventually returned in March 1943 as 'Pheasant'. In March 1943 Pettersen also arrived in Stockholm and was

		the aerodrome at Bomoen.	sent to the UK. Pettersen returned to Norway in September 1943 on Operation Redwing. In April 1943 the last two members of 'Raven' attempted to return to the UK, but only Tønseth was successful. Organisation work continued in the area but there was no contact with the UK until September 1943. In the spring of 1944 a new group called 'Redstart' arrived.
1-2 May 1942 (Catalina)	Unnamed (S. Granlund, E. Østgaard)	Two men landed by Catalina to establish an arms dump north of Folda in northern Norway.	
July 1942	Ostrich (B. Pedersen, P. Deinboll)	This was a plan to send two men into Norway to contact Norwegian workers and train them in undetectable sabotage.	It appears that the operation was never carried out because the two men were allocated to Operation Granard.
July 1942 (Catalina and fishing boat)	Hawke/Kingfisher K. (Aarsæther H. Sverdrup)	Plan to organise a small resistance group on the Lofoten Islands in contact with the UK by W/T. The group would receive arms and stores, which would then be distributed to parts of Norway in barrels of fish by fishing boat or by air.	Attempts were made to deliver Aarsæther to northern Norway firstly by Catalina and secondly by fishing boat but failed. The first trip to land Sverdrup with stores sailed on 11 December 1942 and eventually reached the Lofotens. An attempt early in January 1943 to establish Aarsæther as the W/T operator was a failure and he returned with Sverdrup. The plan was eventually abandoned.
August 1942 (Submarine)	Swan (G. Bråstad W/T operator, A. Fasting)	Establish W/T contact and provide arms instruction to guerrilla groups east of Kristiansand. Fasting was also to train small groups in disposing of dangerous denouncers by assassination.	Landed by the submarine 'Minerve' on the night of 20-21 August off the coast of western Norway. Established W/T contact from 24 September. This operation was troubled by difficulties between Fasting and local groups, including Milorg. Fasting, who had been part of Operation Cheese was unpopular with local SOE groups and his presence caused friction. He left for Stockholm in November 1942 and Bråstad followed in February 1943. The local Milorg organisation was hit badly by a series of arrests in December 1942.
August 1942 (Sea)	Cygnnet (P. Blystad)	This was a trip that left the Shetlands in the 'Sjø' on 22 August for a fortnight's reconnaissance of the Bergen coastal district.	Operation lost at sea.
August 1942	Peewit (O. J. Gulbrandsen, A. Øvre)	Plan to send men to develop contacts in the Oslo shipyards.	Appears plan was never carried out.
September 1942 (via Stockholm)	Plover (P. Solnerdal)	Early in 1942 the Norwegian High Command made a request for direct wireless communication with SL. In May an agreement was reached with the signals chief of Milorg to this effect. 'Plover' was the result of this agreement. He was also instructed to train a local person who could take over from him if necessary.	Plover went in through Stockholm and was installed in Oslo by early September. With the help of Sønsteby he made contact with SL and came on air on 23 September. However, after problems with his call sign and with the help of Milorg, Plover got in touch with SIS station, 'Beta', and used its crystals and signals plan to communicate with the UK. In mid November Solnerdal was instructed to train his successor Rolf Krohn, who began to transmit in December. On 19 December Solnerdal was ordered to Østfold and he sent his last message on 28 December. Krohn, however, signalled through another SIS station 'Corona' that

September 1942 (Stockholm)	Penguin Primus (C. Langeland, G. Setesdal)	The aim was to re-establish W/T contact with the Stavanger area after the arrest of Arne Værum.	Solnordal had been caught on 6 January 1943, and that he would flee to Sweden. Harald Kvande was recruited to set up a new station, 'Plover Beta', and he made contact on 26 May. He eventually changed to the 'Plover Blue' signal plan before being instructed to close down in September 1943.
October 1942 (Air)	Bittern (Jan Allen, Rubin Larsen, Erik Aasheim, Johannes Andersen (<i>Gulosten</i>))	Preparations began in June to train two Norwegians, including Johannes Andersen better known as <i>Gulosten</i> to undertake assassinations. In March Andersen had killed Raymond Colberg, an Abwehr agent and his criminal background attracted him to SOE. The party, dropped on the night of 3-4 October was instructed to train resistance groups in assassination, assist in the carrying out of assassination, and help prisoners to escape.	Between September 1942 and April 1943 attempts were made through Stockholm to send an agent into the area to establish radio contact but ultimately with no success. The group had a list of informers with them but their operation, for security reasons, was not communicated to Milorg and owing to this, confusion over its role and because of the behaviour of its most notorious member, it ended without having carried out its primary task. By the end of the year the whole team had fled to Stockholm.
October 1942 (Air)	Grouse (J. Poulsson (leader), K. Haugland, A. Kjelstrup, C. Helberg).	In early 1942, Poulsson had been selected as part of a plan to sink the Tinnsjø ferry, and later to place flares in the valley around Rjukan to help guide the bombers on Operation Clairvoyant. In February 1942 he presented a paper to Malcolm Munthe suggesting the establishment of guerrilla groups in Telemark. This led to 'Grouse'. The team was due to be dropped at the end of April, but this never occurred. In mid September it was decided the party could also act as advance party for the British Airborne troops on Operation Freshman as well as organising guerrilla groups in Øvre (Upper) Telemark.	The party was dropped on 18 October and its first telegram was sent on 9 November. Its instructions were that, after the completion of 'Freshman', it should train local groups in guerrilla operations, and target 'Hirdmen' – the NS vigilante guard - and denouncers. The group was, however, told to emphasise that its work did not signify that an invasion was imminent. On 23 November, after the failure of 'Freshman' and for security reasons, it was re-named 'Swallow'.
23 Nov 1942	Swallow (J. Poulsson (leader) K. Haugland, A. Kjelstrup, C. Helberg, E. Skinnerland)	After the failure of 'Freshman', Operation Grouse was renamed 'Swallow'. After Operation 'Gunnerside', 'Swallow' was instructed to continue with its subsidiary task of organising local guerrilla groups, although members of the original party could decide whether they stayed in the country. At this point 'Swallow' was also divided into two parts. The organisation of western Telemark would be under Knut Haukelid, from the Gunnerside' team, and be called 'Bonzo'. Eastern Telemark, under Einar Skinnerland would	After 'Gunnerside', Haukelid and Kjelstrup moved to the southwest part of Telemark, whilst Haugland worked on Skinnerland's W/T skills. Poulsson and Helberg both eventually crossed to Sweden, as did Kjelstrup in October 1943, and Haugland after helping Skinnerland, made contact with SL in Oslo and then fled to Sweden. By the summer of 1943, however, Haukelid and Skinnerland had joined up. 'Swallow' had two W/T sets and from the autumn of 1943 these operated as 'Swallow Blue' under Skinnerland and 'Swallow Green' under Niels Krohg, a local man. Haukelid and Skinnerland worked together close to Rjukan and it was through the 'Swallow Blue' station that intelligence on heavy water

		continue under the name 'Swallow'. Haugland would help 'Swallow' and through cut-outs, 'Bonzo'.	production was supplied and instructions given to attack its transportation to Germany. In April 1944, 'Swallow Blue' became 'Brown'. Skinnerland eventually joined the 'Sunshine' operation whilst Haukelid worked with 'Varg' (see below).
November 1942 (Sea)	Petrel (G. Fougner)	Fougner was instructed to meet Home Front leaders and discuss the SOE/PWE and Norwegian proposals for operational propaganda.	He left on 30 November and eventually arrived in Oslo where he met Bjørn Helland Hansen and Eugen Johannessen. He then travelled to Stockholm. He initially indicated that the proposals had been favourably received. He returned to London on 10 February.
November 1942 (Air)	Thrush (B. Fjelstad, N. Gabrielsen)	Dropped on the night of 25-26 November. The objective was to establish a wireless base in the Bykle District in southern Norway as well as arrange for the receipt of stores and equipment for the 'Cheese' area.	Fjelstad was instructed to contact the Milorg District Leader (DL) and act as an arms instructor. He was also to set up a place for the W/T station, which came on air on 7 December, and reconnoitre landing places for the 'Carhampton' operation. In December many local Milorg men were arrested and consequently in February 1943 both men fled to Sweden.
November 1942 (Air)	Gannet (T.K. Hoff, O. Dobloug)	The objective was to provide arms instruction and guerrilla training as well as prepare three 'Saccharine' squads – (assassination teams).	The team landed on 30 November and travelled through the Gudbrandsdal and then Østerdal areas training local instructors and forming a 'Saccharine' squad in both valleys to undertake assassinations. In a period of five weeks, working with a locally appointed leadership, they trained sixty new instructors before departing for Sweden in February 1943.
December 1942 (Sea)	Chough (Lt. Robberstad)	A plan to recruit men from the Bremnes area to work at the Shetlands Base.	Sailed on 12 December. Robberstad was picked up a few days later having achieved relatively little.
December 1942 (Stockholm)	Martin (G. Solberg)	Solberg was instructed to go to the county of Troms in northern Norway to establish contacts and set up a W/T base in preparation for Operation Martin, a plan to organise and assist local resistance groups in this area.	Solberg left Stockholm on 20 December with a courier whilst a W/T was sent separately to Trondheim. Both men were, however, arrested at the Swedish border and Solberg was not released until 5 March. He went to the UK to become the W/T operator for the main 'Martin' operation.
Jan 1943 (Sea)	Moorhen (A. Martens-Meyer)	The intention was to establish W/T contact with the local resistance organisation in Bergen, set up a radio link between the groups in the area, instruct a local W/T operator, examine the possibility of shipping sabotage, and possibly revive an export organisation.	Left on 6 January with Lt. Robberstad equipped with six radio transmitters. Meyer made contact with local groups, but as the radios lacked transformers, the plan for a local network was shelved. One transmitter fortunately did work and contact was made with the UK. The local groups, especially after Televåg, feared reprisals and were not very accommodating. Meyer did, however, set up a group in Bergen and left two radio sets before travelling back to the UK at the end of February. Contact was never made.
Jan 1943 (Air)	Chaffinch (T. Stenersen, O. Sandersen, M. Olsen)	To work in the area to the west of Oslo, establish W/T contact, provide instruction and training, investigate the possibility of local groups undertaking shipping sabotage, and prepare a small local team to carry out assassinations.	Landed on 23 January. Contact was quickly made with SL. Extensive training and instruction was carried out in the area. In liaison with SL a group of 6 men, an 'X Group' was set up and trained in 'silent' killing. Just before they left 3 more 'X-Groups' were prepared. The group also attempted and undertook ship sabotage in

Jan 1943 (Sea)	Lark (J. Pevik, N.U. Hansen)	This was an operation to land arms and equipment in the Trondheim area in preparation for the resurrection of this operation.	Drammen and Moss respectively before leaving Norway at the end of May 1943.
February 1943	Omelette (T. Gulbrandsen)	This was a plan to use Gulbrandsen as a double agent to deceive the Gestapo over SOE plans in Norway.	The party left on 3 January and returned on 11 January having delivered approximately 500 kilos of material to three sites around Trondheim.
March 1943 (Sea)	Antrum Red/Blue (K.J. Aarsæther)	The objective was to send an agent back to the Ålesund area with two wireless sets, crystals and signals plans: 'Red' and 'Blue'. One of the stations would be used to provide shipping intelligence.	Gulbrandsen, the former 'Anchor' organiser, was captured in May 1942. He was allowed to escape in September and eventually returned to England. His story was initially accepted but after the 'Crow' W/T operator returned to the UK and told SOE that Gulbrandsen had been allowed to escape, the truth came out. In early 1943 Gulbrandsen revealed how his escape was fixed. Because of threats against his family he agreed to send intelligence on SOE back to the Gestapo in Norway either through W/T contact or letters to cover addresses in Oslo that would be delivered by new SOE agents. The operation was never undertaken and Gulbrandsen was sent to work at STS 26 for the rest of the war.
March 1943 (Sea)	Lark Blue (O. Sørli, E.G. Onstad)	The objective was to re-establish contact with and continue organising groups in the Trondheim area as well as distribute arms dumps and prepare to receive Operation Source.	K. J. Aarsæther sailed on 4 March. 'Antrum Red' came on air on 19 March. 'Antrum Blue' became an important contact and link for the 'Vestige' and 'Barbara' operations. He also contacted local organisations, trained a local telegraphist, and contacted a group in the Molde area. Aarsæther eventually became sick and was returned to the UK in January 1944.
March 1943 (Air)	Pheasant (W. Waage, J. Solberg Johansen, B. Iversen)	To establish a W/T contact with the UK and organise groups in the Valdres and northern Hallingdal area.	Landed on 14 March with two wireless sets. A third set had been landed a few weeks earlier. The Lark organisation was still intact. Eventually two transmission sites were established in Trondheim and 'Lark Blue' came on air. Gjems-Onstad trained a local operator to replace him in Trondheim and attempted to set up a station in Kristiansund, 'Lark Brown'. In October 1943 both men left for Stockholm.
March 1943 (Sea)	Heron (Red) (O. Baarnes, A.E. Telnes, A. Gundersen)	To re-establish W/T contact with the 'Heron' organisation and Lt. Sjøberg, deliver stores, inspect and provide information on local groups.	The party was dropped on 12 March 1943. On 23 April the radio station came on air and continued to transmit until the end of the war. Contact was made with SL and a number of groups organised in the area. The first airdrop was not, however, received until April 1944 and therefore weapon training was delayed. Operation Firecrest arrived in May 1944 to relieve the 'Pheasant' party.
			After the infiltration of the 'Heron' organisation the previous September, radio contact with the UK was broken. The new team re-established contact on 7 April and Sjøberg was instructed to return to the UK. A Catalina aircraft picked him up at the beginning of May. Radio contact continued but was broken between September and December 1943.

March 1943 (Sea)	Martin (Red) (S. Eskeland, P.R. Blindheim, G. Solberg, J.S. Baalsrud)	The aim was to set up W/T contact between local groups in Troms and the UK, investigate and make contact with these groups, and finally organise them into small units that could attack targets in support of an Allied landing.	Left on 24 March 1943 and arrived off the Norwegian coast on 27 March. A local tradesman, who the group had made contact with, contacted the authorities, which led to the arrival of the Gestapo. The only member of the team to survive was Jan Baalsrud, who made a remarkable journey to Sweden, which he reached toward the end of May.
March 1943 (Air)	Puffin (W. Houlder, S. Blindheim)	To contact SL and train their groups in the Oslo area. Also to advise local groups on insaisissable sabotage in the Oslo shipyards.	Milorg were aware of the imminent arrival of this team before it landed on 17 April 1943. From early May until November it trained groups in the area around Oslo. Both men were captured in November 1943 but escaped to Sweden. They returned in January 1944 and continued training until the summer, when both men travelled to Sweden. They then returned to help organise Milorg sabotage teams and actions in the area, often in collaboration with other SOE teams. Blindheim temporarily returned to Britain between January and April 1945.
April 1943 (Stockholm)	Stonechat (H. Lund)	To work as W/T operator in the vicinity of Rena in <i>Østerdal</i> and hold himself at the disposal of the DL.	W/T contact was made in September but there were many technical problems and by October 'Stonechat' was back in Stockholm. The following spring an attempt was made to set up 'Stonechat Green', but he was captured and replaced by 'Chicken', who came on air in September 1944.
June 1943 (Stockholm)	Thrush Red (B. Fjelstad, N. Gabrielsen)	Fjelstad was instructed to work as an instructor in the area to the east of Oslo whilst Gabrielsen would establish radio contact. They were also instructed to attempt to blow up the Prestebakke bridge in eastern Norway.	Plans to blow up the bridge were soon dropped. Fjelstad began training in the area. He then assisted SL by working as an instructor for the 'X-Groups'. Gabrielsen moved to Oslo to assist SL, training W/T operators and helping establish four new radio stations. He remained connected to SL helping them establish an internal communications network.
September 1943 (Air)	Redwing (L. Pettersen, G. Wiig-Andersen)	The aim was to form a small group in the Voss-Bergen area that could work either as saboteurs or assist other teams from the UK, without endangering other groups in the area. Assassinations would also be undertaken in November as part of 'Ratweek'.	Dropped on 21 September, they made contact with local leaders and established a radio link with the UK. They also met the Milorg District Leader for Bergen and established a relationship. No assassinations were undertaken due to the fear of reprisals. In early 1944, Pettersen was moved to the 'Pheasant' area but Andersen kept transmitting after receiving new crystals.
September 1943 (Air)	Goshawke (J. Gunleiksrud, O. Dobloug)	To provide further instruction for groups in Gudbrandsdal and Østerdal, which it was believed had been taken over by Milorg, and obtain fresh information on these groups. To arrange for assassinations during 'Ratweek' in November 1943.	Dropped on 21 September and carried out extensive training with local groups over the following weeks. Although they prepared for 'Ratweek' no assassinations were undertaken. In February 1944 they crossed the border into Sweden.
September 1943 (Stockholm)	Wagtail (J. Pevik, K. Brodtkorp Danielsen, O. Halvorsen, F. Bekke)	The original objective was to reconnoitre the railway in Namdalen north of Trondheim with a view to cutting off the town at some future date. Before this was undertaken, however, both Pevik and Brodtkorp-Danielsen were instructed along	The team was lead by Ole Halvorsen, a member of a Norwegian communist organisation. An attempt against Rinnan was made on 7 October but failed. The Gestapo then arrested another member of the group, Brekke, which lead to the arrest of Johnny Pevik, who had by then moved on to commence his work in Namdalen. He was

October 1943 (Air)	Grebe (T Hoff, J. Beck, H. Løkken, H. Storhaug, A. Øvergård, A. Graven)	with Ole Halvorsen and Frederick Brekke to attempt an assassination of the Norwegian informer Henry Rinnan. Instructed to establish independent of Milorg, a small force in the hills supplied direct from the UK. They were also directed to reconnoitre the Røros and Dovre railways in order, should the occasion arise, to prevent enemy troops movements.	eventual executed in the cellars of the Mission Hotel in Trondheim. Dropped on 10 October, three of the party were killed on landing and therefore the remaining three were forced to flee to Sweden, where they remained until the following January.
October 1943 (Air)	Lapwing (R. Arnesen, L. Fosseide, S. Haugen, Lt Kvaale)	The objective was to reconnoitre the Røros Railway, south of Trondheim, with a view to sabotage.	Dropped on 10 October. The W/T set was damaged but after several trips to Sweden radio contact was established in June 1944. During August, October, and November 1944 an additional five men strengthened the party. It carried out its first action against the railway network on 10 December and again on 29 December 1944. Three men from the party were later killed in a clash with German forces.
November 1943 (Air)	Curlew (K. Haugland, G. Sønsteby)	To provide a wireless operator for Milorg, to advise Milorg on wireless matters, and to instruct and equip the five wireless stations in the Oslo area.	Dropped on 17 November with the 'Goldfinch' party and containers of weapons and equipment. Haugland left for Kongsberg but was captured by the Gestapo although he escaped and eventually began his work in Oslo. Sønsteby gathered the weapons and brought them to Oslo. In March Haugland's transmissions were detected but he escaped capture and in April both men left for Stockholm.
November 1943 (Air and from Stockholm)	Goldfinch (T. Stenersen, J. Allan, M. Olsen, O. Sandersen)	The party was instructed to resume training in the area to the west of Oslo, liquidate dangerous informers as part of 'Ratweek', sabotage shipping on the west side of Oslo fjord, and reconnoitre Gardemoen airport.	Stenersen and Allan were dropped on 17 November and met Olsen and Sandersen who had arrived from Sweden. The team always worked closely with SL. In December two of the group were surprised by the Germans and Stenersen was shot and captured, whilst Olsen escaped. Olsen took over the party. Meanwhile Sandersen established W/T contact whilst Allen began weapons training. Olsen was joined by Edvard Tallaksen and Birger Rasmussen from the 'Company' team and began work. Reconnaissance of Gardemoen was undertaken and liquidations carried out. By May 1944 the team had been involved in the assassination of at least 4 informers. The team was also made ready to attack the ship that would transport heavy water to Germany and prepared an attack against shipping in Drammen. Members of the group also assisted in attacks against the Labour Service offices in Oslo.
December 1943 (Air)	Sandpiper (J. Ropstad, A. Fosse, J. Eikanger, L. Tofte)	The group was instructed to make contact with existing organisations in southern Norway, establish W/T communication, provide instruction, reconnoitre and plan an attack against the aerodrome at Kjevik, northeast of	Dropped on 10 December the group quickly made radio contact and at the end of December met local Milorg leaders. Over the coming months training was carried out, some weapons delivered and in September the group was reinforced by the arrival of two instructors from Sweden. In October 1944, the 'Sanderling' team arrived.

December 1943 (Air)	Osprey (A. Espedal, K. Hetland, J. Weltzien, K. Kiærland)	Kristiansand, and prepare disruption or protection of communications if the Germans withdraw. Instructed to work in the Stavanger area, establish W/T contact, prepare local guerrilla groups, organise groups to sabotage or if necessary protect lines of communication, receive weapons, and prepare a plan to neutralise Sola aerodrome.	Also dropped on 10 December the group began organisational work in the area but did not receive a delivery of weapons until May 1944. Contact was quickly made with the Milorg District Leader, who from February was in contact with SL in Oslo. From July 1944, the group began to instruct local Milorg groups. In autumn 1944 the area was hit by a series of arrests amongst SIS organisation and 'Osprey' went into hiding. At the end of the year the 'Avocet' team arrived.
January 1944 (Sea)	Falcon (B.E. Sjøberg, A.E. Larsen)	To operate in the Mosjøen area re-organising local groups, receive arms and equipment, reconnoitre and plan the destruction or defence of lines of communication, maintain order after a German withdrawal.	Landed on 18 January. A further three parties were delivered to the area during March (see below) and after joining the 'Heron Red' team this meant that there was a party of 16 working in the region. From April, however, German security police began a series of raids in the region and in June operations ' <i>Bärenfang I to III</i> ' commenced. This resulted in the breaking up of 'Falcon', including the death of Sjøberg on 9 June, and by mid August SOE operations in the area were at an end.
January 1944 (Stockholm)	Throstle (H. Hanson, A.Veda)	To work as weapons instructors for Milorg on the eastern side of Oslo under the command of the 'Thrush' party.	The team worked in D11, east of Oslo and in the summer of 1944 helped in the sabotage of petrol and oil stores in the area.
January 1944 (Stockholm)	Grebe Red (A. Overgård, H. Storhaug, A. Graven)	A re-establishment of the original 'Grebe' party, (see above).	Attempts to leave Sweden were initially hindered by the Swedish police and it was the end of February before the team crossed the border. W/T contact was made and in mid-April 'Goshawk' joined them. The group remained in situ for the rest of the year with some trips back and forth to Sweden. In December J. Gunleiksrud took over the leadership and the team began its involvement in railway sabotage.
January 1944 (Sea)	Antrum Green (K. Aarsæther)	Knut took over from his brother to continue W/T contact with the UK, provide intelligence, arrange sabotage of shipping and communications, form a group to carry out anti-sabotage and police the area in the event of a German withdrawal.	Remained in the area until September and organised guerrilla groups, weapons instruction, laid plans for demolishing ferries, and began a whispering campaign aimed at mobilising the Norwegian fishing fleet should an invasion occur.
February 1944 (Sea)	Merlin , (H. Mowinkle-Nilsen, L. Dallard – W/T operator)	To organise and instruct groups in the Bergen area, establish W/T contact with the UK, and prepare counter-scorch activities.	Three Milorg men returned to the UK on the boat. The Merlin W/T operator moved around the area until September 1944 when due to German raids he went undercover. Instruction was initially undertaken in Bergen and from May in the surrounding districts. In autumn 1944 the Merlin instructor moved back to Bergen where he remained until January 1945 when he joined the Bjørn West base.
February 1944	Falcon (II) , (H.	(See above).	

(Sea)	Lynghaug, L. Largass, A. Z. Solbakken)		
March 1944 (Air)	Fieldfare (J. Rønneberg, B. Strømsheim, O. Aarsæther)	To reconnoitre the Åndalsnes-Dombås railway, prepare weapons and explosives dumps near the railway, prepare counter-scorch plans for the railway.	Dropped on the night of 7-8 March. A bad landing so they lost much of their equipment. Received further supplies in July but had to survive until the liberation on meagre rations. Carried out their one and only action against the railway on 5 January 1945. In March 1945, Rønneberg travelled back to Britain but returned in May to help in the liberation of Ålesund
March 1944 (Sea)	Falcon (III) (J. Kvarme, T. Valberg, E. Grannes)	(See above).	
March 1944 (Stockholm)	Lark/Durham (E. Gjems-Onstad, I. Gausland, H. Larsen)	To establish W/T contact, re-organise Lark, and build up the propaganda organisation 'Durham'.	Lt. Gausland went to Trondheim in January to rebuild contacts after a wave of arrests. Gjems-Onstad followed in March to take over the leadership and act as W/T operator. He built up local groups and returned to Stockholm in June. He returned to Trondheim in August with a new W/T operator, E. Løkse, 'Lark Yellow'. Løkse was arrested and Gjems-Onstad again returned from Stockholm although his time was taken up with 'Durham' activities. Eventually F. Beichman joined him as W/T operator followed by T. Bjørnas and A. Wisloff. In 1945 some railway sabotage was undertaken before Gjems-Onstad returned to Stockholm for the last time.
March 1944 (Sea)	Falcon Peregrine (H.K. Hansen, L. Sandin, E. Rustan, R. Rogne)	(See above).	
April 1944 (Sea)	Albatross , (L. Skjöld, P. Wegeland)	To re-organise local groups if necessary, instruct them in arms, explosives, and guerrilla tactics, and to prepare plans for the prevention of a German scorched-earth policy in the area north of Stavanger. Also to reconnoitre the aluminium plant at Saudasjøen.	Landed in the area on 17 April. Instruction continued through 1944 in co-operation with the local Milorg leadership in Haugesund. Weapons were delivered but in the autumn the Germans began a series of raids and the organisation was under severe pressure. In November the area was reinforced by the arrival of the 'Auk' team. Production at Saudasjøen had ceased due to a lack of raw materials.
April 1944 (Air)	Buzzard (A. Aubert, H. Henriksen)	To assist SL in executing denouncers in the Oslo area.	Remained in the Oslo area for the rest of the war and was responsible for a number of assassinations. The most significant was the execution of Major-General Karl Marthinsen, the head of the Norwegian Stapo, in February 1945, which resulted in the execution of 28 Norwegians.
April 1944 (Sea)	Redstart (W. Johannesen, F. Kvist, I. Birkeland)	To bring the organisation in the Voss area into a state of readiness through instruction in guerrilla tactics, and to prepare counter-scorch activities in case of a German withdrawal.	Landed on 30 April with the 'Firecrest' team. Joined the Merlin W/T operator and began training in the area. Made preparations to sabotage the Bergen railway to support an invasion, and protect Dale power station from German destruction. In August they moved to the Hardanger area to continue training but in September during a German raid they lost their W/T set.

April 1944 (Sea)	Firecrest (E. Madsen, B. Holth-Larsen, E. Lorentzen, G. Sætersday)	To relieve the 'Pheasant' team in the Hallingdal-Valdres area, re-organise groups, carry out instruction in weapons, explosives and guerrilla tactics, and prepare counter-scorch activities.	Landed 30 April and soon began to carry out weapons instructions. In the autumn the men helped with the provision of supplies for the 'Elg' base. From summer of 1944 the team also began to undertake sabotage in the area, especially against oil and petrol supplies.
April 1944 (Air)	Woodpecker (O. Sættem)	To reconnoitre the Dovre railway and other forms of communication with a view to sabotage.	This was the leader of the party who was dropped with the 'Buzzard' team on the night of 28-29 April near Larvik and remained in the area until October.
April/May 1944	Goldcrest (S. Sveinesen, R. Olsen)	To reinforce the DL and to increase the preparedness of District 14.1 around Drammen.	It is unclear whether this team ever went into Norway. The first radio message from 'Goldcrest' was, however, sent at the end of May, but this could have been done by a local operator.
May 1944 (Stockholm)	Robin , (A.H. Pevik, A. Torp)	Another attempt to liquidate informers particularly Henry Rinnan and Ivar Grande whose activities had caused so much damage in the county of Trøndelag.	Left Stockholm on 20 May and stayed in Norway for one month without producing any results. Returned in early August and formed two groups to watch informers, but by mid October both men had been recalled.
July 1944 (Stockholm)	Crackle (F. Brandt, A. Torhildsen)	Instruction in dealing with landmines.	Two visits were paid to the field and four courses held.
August 1944 (Air)	Golden Eagle (M. Olsen, O. Sandersen)	To make preliminary preparations for what became the 'Elg' base. To establish W/T contact, make ready to receive supplies and escapees from German mobilisation orders.	Radio contact was made and in the next three month 20 supply drops were received. The main team arrived on 27 November.
August/September 1944 (Stockholm)	Sepals/Perianth (Lt, Håkon Kyllingmark-Commanding Officer)	The plan was to set up 2 bases, 'Sepals' and 'Sepals I', with 3 operating units, 'Perianth', 'Perianth I & II', on Swedish territory close to Narvik under the cover of being intelligence operations. They would supply intelligence on the area, establish a W/T link, and prepare attacks against targets although nothing would be undertaken without authority from London. In November permission was given to undertake sabotage	By mid September 1944 both bases were manned and had W/T contact but for the rest of the year they only supplied intelligence. In mid-January preparations to set up a third base, 'Sepals III' began whilst the other two bases became 'Sepals I & II'. In March another base 'Sepals Gorgon' was also set up. From mid January sabotage was undertaken, initially from 'Sepals I' but primarily from 'Sepals III'. The bases were also a link, a source of supplies, and an organisational point for Milorg groups around Narvik and in the county of Troms. The bases finally played an important role in the liberation of the area in May 1945 and in the protection of local sites.
September 1944	Scale Operations: Octave (Oslo), Minim, (Stockholm), Quaver and Semi-Quaver (Nordland & Trondheim), Semi-Breve, Crotchet, and Sharp that together were to cover Bergen and the Stavanger area.	These Allied missions were to advise and assist the Home Front in organising all available forces, to co-ordinate action within Norway with that taken by Allied forces outside, to help hinder German counter-scorch plans, and assist in the arrival of military and civil supplies.	Only Quaver/Semi-Quaver and Minim were eventually undertaken. See below for details.
September 1944 (sea)	Woodlark (H. Helgesen, O. Østgaard, O. Walderhaug)	To form a base from which the Nordland railway in Namdal north of Trondheim could be attacked.	Landed on 12 September the three had by the end of September been joined by four additional men from Stockholm. The party established a base just inside the Swedish

September 1944 (Sea)	Razorbill (H. Rasmussen, L. Pettersen)	To instruct groups in Bergen, receive weapons, arrange for the transfer of men to the Bjørn West base, reconnoitre chosen targets to be protected, carry out attacks against enemy oil supplies.	border but from an early stage it suffered from internal conflict and although a W/T operator arrived in November he was never able to make contact. Supplies were short and there were several trips to Stockholm. On 13 January members of the party attacked the Jørstad Bridge resulting in the wrecking of a German troop train. From this point, however, the party gradually broke up, had new leadership and increasingly played a subsidiary role in the area, although it marched into Steinkjær as a separate unit at the liberation.
September 1944 (Sea)	Antrum Yellow/Grey (K. J. Aarsæther, K. Engelsen)	To organise and instruct groups in the Ålesund area, supply weapons and stores, prepare counter-scorch activities, and plan sabotage against German communications during an invasion or withdrawal.	Arrived on 18 September. Another two arrived on 1 October. Training was carried out, weapons received, intelligence provided on the U-boat base. The group worked with both Milorg and the communist organisation, <i>Saborg</i> . It also provided names of informers for liquidation, and two local men were assassinated. A steam ship and transformers at the ship works were also sabotaged. At the beginning of May 1945 it was 'Razorbill' that contacted the German Command in Bergen in order to help secure a peaceful liberation.
September 1944 (Air)	Sanderling (K. Austad, T. Andersen, H. P. Armstrong, L. Eide)	The four were instructed to work in the counties of East and West Agder in southern Norway with the 'Sandpiper' team	Sailed on night of 22/23 September and replaced Knut Aarsæther who returned to the UK. Work continued on building up the local organisation and they were reinforced in October by the arrival of two more men. Antrum was instructed to work closely with the local Milorg leadership, which would be linked with SL in Oslo. At the end of October a message was sent via the 'Antrum' radio that Ivar Grande, the informer, should be liquidated. He was killed on 11 December.
October 1944 (Sea)	Razorbill II (E. N. Kvale, J. Nesheim)	(See Above)	These four, including Percy Armstrong who had mixed British and Norwegian parentage, were dropped into southern Norway to reinforce the 'Sandpiper' team. Austad and Eide worked in the area around Kristiansand. Preparations were made to receive operation 'Varg I' but activities were badly hit by German raids and organisation was difficult. Supplies also remained short and it was March 1945 before airdrops eased the situation and some training could commence.
October 1944 (Sea)	Lark (Gjems-Onstad)	(See Above)	
October 1944 (Air)	Sunshine, Moonlight, Starlight, Lamplight (L. Tronstad, N. Lind, J. Poulsson, H. Nygaard, A. Kjelstrup, L. Brønn, E. Hagen, C.	To protect the power stations in Telemark and Buskerud along with the Norsk Hydro industries in Rjukan and Notodden against any German attempt to initiate a scorched-earth policy. These	It was in many ways a reforming of the 'Gunnarside' team. The main party was dropped on 5 October. W/T contact was made with the UK and the operation worked closely with the management of Norsk Hydro, the local Milorg organisation and

	Helberg, G. Syverstad)	power stations provided 60% of the power in <i>Østlandet</i> , eastern Norway. Led by Leif Tronstad, who had been the central figure in the plans and preparations to disrupt heavy water production at Vemork. The plan was divided into three sections: 'Moonlight' with Rjukan at its core; 'Starlight' in Numedal, northeast of Rjukan; 'Lamplight' in the area around Notodden. Jens Poulsson led 'Moonlight' with Claus Helberg as W/T operator; Arne Kjelstrup led 'Starlight', whilst 'Lamplight' was the responsibility of Herluf Nygaard. Norman Lind, a British officer with Norwegian parents, acted as liaison officer. Einar Skinnerland became W/T operator at Tronstad's HQ.	through them with SL in Oslo. Training and a series of preparations were made to protect these sites over the coming months. On 11 March, Tronstad was tragically killed and Poulsson took over the leadership of the operation. On 9 May 1945, 'Sunshine' was ordered to mobilise. The district was brought under its control and the designated targets protected. Norwegian SS soldiers were imprisoned and Nazis arrested in collaboration with the local police.
October 1944 (Air)	Woodpecker (K. Hellan, R. J. Johannessen, Ø. Nilsen)	This party had originally been called 'Linnet'. They were instructed to reconnoitre the Dovre railway south of Trondheim with a view to carrying out sabotage.	Dropped on 4 October and joined their leader O. Sættem. In early March 1945, four additional men from Sweden reinforced the team. On 9 December the party received orders to disrupt train traffic. They attacked the Stølan tunnel between Opdal and Bjerkinn and stopped traffic for three days. The party had W/T difficulties for a while and was short of supplies until further drops were made.
October 1944 (Sea)	Redstart (F. Olsvik)	(See above).	Olsvik was the new W/T operator. The Merlin operator moved to Bergen to serve the 'Redwing' team. At the beginning of December the 'Redstart' team were told to prepare railway sabotage but as the Germans did not withdraw from the area this was never carried out. They continued with instruction until February when the priority became protection of key sites in the area, especially Bomoen aerodrome. Despite airdrops the area lacked weapons and equipment and there were a series of raids that forced the team under cover. They eventually joined the Bjørn East base, which took over responsibility for the Hardanger area.
October 1944 (Sea)	Siskin (M. Olsen, R. Ulstein, H. Svindseth, N. Fjeld)	To instruct groups in the Sogn area, especially at important power stations in readiness to undertake preventative action. Also to receive supplies and establish W/T contact with the UK.	The team trained groups in the area and received supplies. Between 10 April and 1 May 1945, 35 tons of weapons and equipment were unloaded from sub-chasers and by mid April around 480 men were organised in the Inner Sogn area alone. On 6 May Captain Wendelbø Lysne arrived to take over all forces in the area. From 8 May mobilisation began, and from 9 May members of NS and the Gestapo were disarmed and interned.
October 1944 (Sea)	Bjørn West (F. Kayser, S. Synnes)	The objective was to reconnoitre the area between Bergen and Sognefjord with a view to the possibility of establishing a guerrilla base and reception area.	Left the Shetlands on 15 October. This was the advance party, which would begin the preparatory work.

October 1944 (Air)	Quaver /Semi-Quaver (J. Adamson, M. Watson, P. Dahl, Sgt. Lindsay)	To provide intelligence on enemy troop movements through the county of Nordland, assist local organisations, establish contact with Milorg, and consider possibilities of railway sabotage between Mo and Mosjøen.	Dropped on 16 October this was the only operation sent to Norway that was predominately made up of British recruits, including a SOE officer. The strategically important area north of Trondheim had not had contact with the UK since the break-up of the 'Falcon' operation the previous August. The operation was a disaster as soon after landing the party was surprised by a group of German soldiers. This led to the capture of Adamson, his imprisonment in Norway and eventual transportation to Germany, although he survived the war. The other three recruits eventually escaped to Sweden.
October 1944 (Sea)	Bjørn West II (R. Tvinnerheim, K. Karlsen, A. Trønes, M. Mathiesen)	(See above) Also to establish radio contact, reconnoitre the billeting areas and dropping places, and to report to London.	This was the rest of the preparatory group, which on 7 November received its first weapons drop.
October 1944 (Sea)	Antrum (H. Hoel, I. Næss)	(See above)	(See above)
November 1944 (Air)	Varg I (H. Sandvik, T. Abrahamsen, S. Heidenreich, E. Johnsen, H. Bugge)	To make preparations for the safe reception, billeting, maintaining, training and employment of men in the hills of Setesdal, north of Kristiansand. Once set up the base would receive local Milorg forces that would be trained in weapons and explosives use, sabotage and anti-sabotage.	The team was dropped on the night of 1-2 November and met by J. Ropstad and 4 men from 'Sandpiper'. The leader was Harald Sandvik, and in addition to the original party four men from Milorg also joined the group. It was planned that the base would have 5 billeting areas.
November 1944 (Air)	Varg (E. Vestre, T. Halvorsen)	(See above).	Dropped on 7 November to reinforce the area.
November 1944 (Air)	Woodlark (Y. Øgarrrd)	(See above).	
November 1944 (Sea)	Auk (K. Vilnes, P. Ørstenvik, Capt. Sjø, Lt. Robberstad)	To reinforce the 'Arquebus' and 'Albatross' teams in the Haugesund area and reorganise the district. A W/T link would be established. The group's leader was responsible for all 3 teams and would be military adviser to the Milorg District Leader. Local teams would organise preventative work and reconnoitre cutting points along local communications.	After the arrival of 'Auk' in early November contact with Milorg widened. The role assigned to local groups was a combination of counter-scorch activities and attempts to hinder German troop movements to the east should it be required.
November 1944 (Air)	Dipford-Frinton (P. Deinboll, A. Gjestland)	To work with SL as technical advisers on railways, telecommunications, information, and propaganda.	The plane disappeared over the North Sea.
November 1944 (Sea)	Snowflake (P. Ratvik, H. Svindseth to join him from 'Siskin')	To organise and instruct local groups around Nordfjord, south of Ålesund in arms, explosives, guerrilla warfare, and counter-scorch activities in order to protect Svelgen Power and Transformer Station and Stryn	Landed on 27 November and made W/T contact on 2 December. Had contact with a local SIS station, 'Roska', which during March 1945 sent messages on behalf of 'Snowflake'. By the time of the German surrender 'Snowflake' had organised 400 men although they lacked weapons. On 13

November 1944 (Air)	Elg I (P. Strande, P. Holst, A. Hagen, H. Christiansen)	Repeater Station. To continue the work of 'Golden Eagle' by preparing for the safe reception, billeting, maintaining, training and employment of 1200 men between Valdres and Hallingdal.	May it set up a HQ in Florø and was involved in the arrest of around 70 Nazis, informers, and Black Marketers. Dropped on 27 November the four officers went to their billeting areas whilst Strand contacted the local Milorg organisation.
November-January 1944	Scapula	This was a plan to send a whaleboat with two instructors, a W/T operator, arms and equipment to the island of Senja in the north of Norway to assist resistance groups in their efforts to resist the German evacuation of the local population.	In November 1944, SIS station 'Gudrun' on the island of Senja' (E. Johansen) telegraphed London asking for weapons to be supplied to local groups so that they could resist Germany's forced evacuation of the population. In the end Johansen rejected the proposal and it was cancelled.
November/December 1944	Husky (Major Andrew Croft and Lt J. Baalsrud – a total party of 5 Norwegians and 8 British officers)	To make contact with, supply and instruct detachments of Milorg behind the German lines in the north of Norway, with a view to operations against retreating enemy units.	The eventual plan was that the Royal Norwegian Navy would transport a SOE team to the north of Norway, whilst four fishing vessels would sail independently to the region to be at SOE's disposal. The operation was cancelled at the end of January 1945 due to the lack of protection from the enemy's small naval craft.
December 1944 (Air/Stockholm)	Curlew (G. Sønsteby)	In November Sønsteby had been ordered to travel to London.	In mid December he returned to Norway via Stockholm with his 'Directive to nr 24', which set out his tasks as sabotage chief for SL.
December 1944, (Air to Stockholm)	Minim (Major H. A. Nyberg)	To represent SFHQ at the SOE and OSS Missions in Stockholm on all matters for which SFHQ was responsible to SHAEF. To assist in co-ordinating the activities of both Missions	Nyberg arrived in Stockholm on 16 December with the title of Honour Assistant Military Attaché. Liased on the preparation of the Norwegian Police troops (Operation Beefeater) and sent regular reports on their progress, which also included intelligence on conditions in Norway. After the liberation he accompanied the police troops into Norway.
December 1944 (Air)	Cramlington (H. Ryen)	The intention was to have a party of 16 men working from a base on Swedish soil. The ultimate objective was to cut the railway between Grong and Majavatn in the Nordland. A base was to be set up in the neighbourhood of the target.	Dropped on 22 December. This was the preliminary reconnaissance by the leader of the party before he went on to Stockholm to meet the rest of the party.
December 1944 (Sea)	Bjørn East (O. Berentsen, J. Akslen, K. Nordgron, L. Olsen)	As the area to be covered by Bjørn West base was so large it was decided to divide it into two. Bjørn East would be close to Vossevangen.	This was a preliminary party of four under the leadership of Captain Berentsen.
December 1944 (Air)	Elg II (K. Poulssen, A. Thon)	(See above).	Dropped on 28 December. From this point comprehensive instruction began and eventually many men returned to their hometowns to continue training. From September 1944 to May 1945 the base received 75 airdrops with equipment for 3000 men. W/T contact was maintained with London and the transmitters in 'Elg' were in contact with six other radio stations.

December 1944 (Air)	Farnborough I (J. M. Neerland)	To cover the Milorg District D.11, this included part of Oslo and the area to the east of it. The aim of the Farnborough operations was to reinforce the District Leadership and increase its preparedness, with special attention to preventative actions.	In April 1945 the enemy began to show an interest in the base and on 26 April there was a clash between 120 Germans and 85 local men. Twenty-nine Germans were killed and thirty wounded, whilst 'Elg' lost six men and had two wounded. Dropped on 28 December, Neerland instructed the district's most important recruits, so-called 'Q-teams' that had formed cells and were hiding in the woods. He also examined and adjusted the protective plans that had been produced to cover this area.
January 1944 (Air)	Farnborough II (E. Eng, J. Herman Linge)	To cover D.12, northeast of Oslo. Linge was also given the task of liquidating the Norwegian Nazi, Ole Utengen.	Dropped on the night 31 Dec-1 Jan. Linge, son of Martin Linge, was captured and eventually transported to Germany. Meanwhile, Lt. Eng began instruction, organising drop zones, and selected those who would have responsibility for protecting key sites. He eventually became chief of staff in D.12 working closely with the District Leader.
December 1944 (Air)	Farnborough III (E. Welle-Strand, K. E. Nordahl, O. Birknes, H. Engebretsen, A. Christiansen)	To cover the Oslo area. This was probably the best-organised Milorg District, which by July 1944 had over 4000 men in its ranks.	Dropped on the night 31 Dec-1 Jan. Contact was quickly made with the District Leader. The area had 8 'Foscott' priority targets, 9 'Carmarthen' targets and 24 smaller targets and therefore there was a significant amount of preparatory work to ensure that all these sites were protected. Instruction was also undertaken in both tactics and the use of weapons and explosives. To help training a camp was set up outside Oslo. On 10 May all the primary and secondary targets in Oslo were successfully taken over by protection units from D.13.
December 1944 (Air)	Farnborough V (K. Fossen, J. Opåsen)	To cover District 14.3, the area around Gjøvik north of Oslo.	Dropped on 29 December. Contact was quickly made with the District Leader, but Opåsen was killed in a shooting accident during a training exercise. Nevertheless, over the following months preparations to protect local targets such as the Raufoss Ammunition Factory, continued along with the training of local recruits.
December 1944 (Air)	Farnborough VI (H. Stridsklev, G. Bjaali, K. Fjell)	District 15, the west side of Oslo fjord.	Dropped on the night of 28/29 December. (There is little information on this operation).
December 1944 (Air)	Farnborough VII (J. Irminger, J. Stensnes)	District 17, most of the county of Telemark in southern Norway.	Dropped on 1 January. Milorg men had formed cells in the hills and this was where early training began. Detailed plans were also drawn up for the protection of key sites such as Hauen Transformer Station.
December 1944 (Air)	Avocet (T. Lien, A. Floisand, J. Thu, I. Tønseth)	To reinforce 'Osprey' in the Stavanger area, organise sabotage cells along lines of communication, reconnoitre Sola aerodrome and dropping places, provide protection for vital plants.	It was dropped on 31 December and its radio station came on air on 9 January. The party was instructed to work with Milorg, although contact should be infrequent. A meeting with the DL for D19 was held but an instruction programme was delayed owing to a lack of weapons. There was only one drop in January, none in February, and Stavanger had no weapons at all until a small

Nov/Dec 1944 (Stockholm)	Freethorpe (F. Baarnes, I. Rogne, A. Solbakken, A. E. Larsen)	To protect the repeater station at Mo i Rana, attack railway communications, and obtain intelligence on German troop movements using a group organised amongst the local railwaymen.	amount was moved there at the end of March. At the liberation 500 men were mobilised but only half had received weapons training. Protection of local sites also proved difficult. In September 1944 Odin Normann, a trades union courier, offered to build up an organisation amongst the railwaymen in Mo i Rana. 'Quaver' was originally to contact Normann but after this failed a group was organised in Stockholm under 2 nd Lt. Baarnes that through Normann and a Swedish contact formed a base just inside the Swedish border from where it was instructed to carry out its tasks. It would also have a W/T station 'Fulmar' to assist it. Eventually attacks were carried out against the railway a bridge north of Mo in February and the railway in April. At the liberation 'Freethorpe' proceeded to Mo i Rana and assisted the local Milorg forces.
January 1945 (Stockholm)	Farnborough VIII (P. Emblemsvåg, E. Boyesen, J. Elvestad)	To work in D.23, around Lillehammer and the Gudbrandsdal.	Crossed into Norway early in February and met the Milorg District Leader at Tretten. They were instructed to plan protection of important sites in the area and instruct local groups in weapons and guerrilla tactics. Operating in this area, however, proved difficult, especially as the Wehrmacht had its HQ at Lillehammer. There were several confrontations with German patrols and in one of them Boyesen was killed. Nevertheless, in the early morning of 10 May, Milorg successfully took control of the important sites in the area.
January 1945 (Sea)	Polar Bear VIII (F. A. Søreida)	To protect the ports of Haugesund and Odda.	Sailed on 12 January and with the help of 'Arquebus' eventually arrived at Haugesund. He eventually undertook protective preparations at both ports
January 1945 (Sea)	Polar Bear III (O. Drønen, J. Jensen)	To cover the port of Bergen.	Sailed on 16 January and eventually arrived at Bergen where they met the District Leader for D20.2. It was discovered that the Germans had made preliminary preparations to demolish some quays. Two hundred men from Milorg were made ready to assist and preparations were made to protect the port. At the liberation all the charges that the Germans had laid were disabled.
January 1945 (Sea)	Polar Bear IV (F. Åsmund Færøy)	To cover Stavanger.	Sailed on 16 January and landed on Bømlo north of Haugesund. Færøy was, however, arrested as he tried to get to Stavanger
January 1945 (Stockholm)	Polar Bear VI-W (S. Skelfjord)	To cover Larvik, Sandefjord and Tønsberg on the west side of Oslo fjord.	He arrived in the area from Stockholm in January and worked closely with Milorg. In early March he reported that he had completed his preparations.
January 1945 (Stockholm)	Polar Bear VI-Oslo (S. Egede-Nissen, J. Helen)	To cover Oslo.	Arrived in the area on 19 January and at the end of the month made contacts with Milorg and harbour employees. Groups were trained but there were few signs that the Germans were preparing to destroy the quays. Nevertheless, training continued and on 8 May Milorg groups entered the harbour

January 1945 (Sea)	Razorbill (H. Rasmussen)	(See above).	area and took up their positions. On 9 May, Milorg together with German guards began to patrol the harbour network. Rasmussen had returned to the UK to obtain equipment for Bjørn West. Whilst in London it was agreed that targets in the Bergen area would be protected by B.org groups. Eventually, however, it was Milorg that organised protection of primary 'Foscott' targets in Bergen, whilst secondary targets were looked after by B.org.
January 1945 (Stockholm)	Polar Bear VI-E (I. Steensland)	To cover the harbours of Fredrikstad and Moss on the east side of Oslo harbour.	Arrived from Sweden on 23 January. The Germans had made preparations to destroy the harbour at Fredrikstad. Steensland was given a group of 120 men from Milorg. Contacts within the harbour were made, intelligence gathered and instruction commenced. In Moss 100 men from Milorg were also trained in harbour protection. Early in February Steensland assisted by Milorg organised the capture of a total of eleven tugboats from Moss and Fredrikstad and they were sailed to Sweden. He returned to Norway in early March and continued preparation, although his men lacked weapons. He then captured a cargo boat and small tanker and organised their disappearance to Sweden. He returned to Fredrikstad on 2 May and after the liberation, claiming he was from the Allied Commission in Oslo, persuaded the Germans to remove all their guards from the harbour.
January 1945 (Stockholm)	Coton (A. Hegstad, L. Sandin, L. Langaas, J. Gundersen)	This was a plan, presented in early November 1944, to set up a base on Swedish territory from where the railway south of Mosjøen could be attacked. The main target was the Trolldal viaduct.	Hegstad travelled to reconnoitre the area around Atosstugan in Sweden at the end of January 1945 and the other men followed during February. By the middle of March there were a total of 14 living at the base, and on 21 April some of them cut the railway in two places north of Majavatn. At the liberation the Coton party proceeded to Mosjøen and took over leadership of the resistance groups.
January 1945 (Sea)	Corsham (K. Stoltenberg, G. Berg, O. Bergh)	To protect Follafooss power station and Folden dam north of Trondheim	Landed on 29 January and proceeded to the area of the targets. They were instructed to work independently but this proved impossible. Their radios were also damaged and eventually they decided to cross the border into Sweden, arriving in Stockholm on 6 March. They did not return to the area.
February 1945 (Stockholm)	Polar Bear II (L. Hauge, T. Renaas)	To cover the port of Trondheim.	The party arrived in Trondheim on 7 February. It was met by Gjems-Onstad who was co-ordinating the 'Lark' and 'Durham' operations. The Germans had made some preparations to blow up the quays but it was initially difficult to obtain recruits from within the harbour area to help. Eventually 15 men from 'Lark' and 50 men from 'Durham' were transferred to 'Polar Bear' and training commenced. Unfortunately, weapons drops did not materialise. In April 1945, 'Polar Bear' was placed under the District Leader for D.22, and on 9 May the team, consisting of 130, took over the

February 1945 (Sea)	Antrum (K. Aarsæther)	To re-establish W/T contact with the UK, organise protection of certain 'Foscott' targets around Ålesund and provide arms instruction.	harbour in Trondheim. Leif Hauge also took over the ports at Steinkjer and Namsos. In January both K. J. Aarsæther and the Milorg District Leader (DL) were brought back to the UK for conversations. It was decided that Knut Aarsæther would work better with the DL and he was sent back to the Ålesund area on 13-14 February. Radio contact was re-established on 17 February. Organisation within the area continued and by mid-April there were 1500 men prepared but without weapons, although in the final weeks of the occupation supplies did increase.
February 1945 (Sea)	Diver (P. Skram, T. Jørgen)	To act as military adviser to the District Leader in Ålesund and in this role plan actions to protect local sites, assist the Allies in the event of an invasion, or hamper a German withdrawal.	Sailed with the DL on 13 February. He had been given a new directive whilst in the UK. Contact would be established with SL in Oslo and the district, D.21, extended and divided into three sub-districts. Milorg groups would also be built up and trained. Contact was made with Oslo and approval given.
February 1945 (Stockholm)	Crowfield (B. Hasle, B. Lier, A. Vibe)	An operation to protect Moholt transformer station and Trondheim repeater station and to instruct and lead the local groups recruited for these tasks.	The operation commenced when Hasle and Lier were flown to Stockholm on 15 February. The group left for the border on 1 March but for various reasons this first attempt was abandoned. On 17 April, Hasle travelled via Oslo to Trondheim, arriving on 26 April. Vibe then left for Norway with another man and W/T contact was eventually established with Trondheim on 11 May. The targets were occupied on 9 May.
February 1945 (Air-Stockholm)	Farnborough X (E. Næss, N. Uri)	To cover D.25, centred on Hamar in eastern Norway.	The party arrived in Stockholm on 12 February and a few days later travelled to the district and met the DL. He had already received instructions to organise the protection of selected 'Foscott' targets, which the expedition was instructed to assist.
February 1945 (Air-Stockholm)	Farnborough IX (O. Berg)	To cover D.26, centred on Tynset and Alvdal in Hedemark in eastern Norway.	Arrived in Sweden on 19 January and reached the district on 14 February where he made himself available to the DL and assisted with preparations for the protection of 'Foscott' targets.
February 1945 (Stockholm)	Sparrow (N. Gabrielsen)	To give Milorg W/T operators extra training and to assist them in ensuring a reliable communication service with the UK. If required to assist W/T operators outside Oslo.	Norman Gabrielsen had been working with SL since autumn 1943. This was a continuation of his earlier work.
February 1945 (Stockholm)	Sepals III (L. Schanche, B. Bjølseth, O. Mjeide)	To organise the despatch of operation 'Crofton', carry out certain sabotage activities, maintain contact with Milorg, provide instruction, and when possible supply them with weapons.	Preparations began in January (See above). Several acts of sabotage were undertaken from this base.
February 1945 (Stockholm)	Dunkerton (E. Jacobsen, S. Hårstad, M. Uglem, A. Aksnes)	To protect power stations at Nea, southeast of Trondheim.	All the men were recruited in Sweden and trained there. By 18 February they were in Norway, meeting and developing contacts in the area. By mid March, however, due to

February 1945 (Air)	Chacewater (S. Armtsen, A. Larsen, K. Stordalen)	To organise protection of 'Foscott' targets in D.16, in Telemark and Buskerud.	German activity the group was back in Stockholm. The whole group was back in Norway by the end of April Dropped on 21 February the group made contact with DL for D.16. Targets around Kongsberg were agreed and training of local cells began. German raids, however, soon followed and in clashes a number of enemy troops were killed, which led to further raids and the loss of equipment. Nevertheless, by the time of the liberation 'Chacewater' had 300 men under them and together they took over their targets intact.
February 1945 (Sea)	Redstart (I. Birkeland, C. Johnsen)	(See above).	In January Birkeland returned to the UK. He returned to Norway on 21 February and the priority was to protect certain important sites in the area (See above).
February 1945 (Sea)	Bjørn West (B. Eliassen)	(See above).	Further reinforcement.
February 1945 (Air)	Turkey (A. Pevik, U. Axelsen)	To join the other SOE groups operating in the Oslo area and work with them under the authority of SL and the direct command of Gunnar Sønsteby.	Dropped on 22 February and became part of the 'Oslo Gang' operating under Sønsteby.
February 1945 (Air-Stockholm)	Polar Bear I (L. Larsen, B. Rist)	To cover the port of Narvik.	Arrived at the 'Sepals II' base on 22 February and brought, with the help of Swedish soldiers, significant supplies. Contacts were made with Milorg in D.40 and with Kyllingmark, head of the 'Sepals' operation. Stores were moved closer to Narvik and training undertaken but activity by enemy troops meant that progress was slow.
February 1945	Farnborough IV	To cover D14.1, Buskerud and Telemark.	Was due to be landed on 23 February but the operation was replaced by 'Chacewater'.
February 1945 (Air)	Griffon (A. Rathe, A. Engebretsen)	To reinforce the 'Grebe' party and help undertake railway sabotage.	Both 'Griffon' and Guillemot' with two Norwegian army officers were dropped on 24 February and assisted 'Grebe' in its area.
February 1945 (Air)	Guillemot (B. Sevendal, K. Bredsen)	(See above).	
March 1945 (Stockholm)	Cramlington (Cpl. Y. Øgaard, 2. Lt. J. Kvarme, 2. Lt. H. Hansen),	To act as a reception party for Operation Waxwing, (see below).	At the end of January it was decided that H. Ryan (see above) and these three would act as a reception party for Operation Waxwing. There were problems with the Swedish authorities on the border and it was eventually the end of February before the party successfully crossed into Norway. The 'Waxwing' party was dropped on 24 March.
March 1945 (Air)	Clothall (A. Johnsen, W. Hansen, J. Melsom, L. Aagard, B. Pettersen W/T operator from Sweden)	To provide protection for the power stations at Askim, southeast of Oslo, which supplied power to the capital.	Eventually dropped on 3 March and after a long march arrived in D.11. They began to reconnoitre the targets, draw up plans, and organise local protection groups. Employees from within the targets were also trained in protection skills. By the end of April these groups were made up of 4-500 men. From 7 May 'Clothall' was mobilised and over the

March 1945 (Stockholm)	Crofton (E. Juden, L. Schanke, O. Mjelde, B. Bjølset)	To protect power, repeater, and telecommunications stations around Mo i Rana.	following days occupied its targets. Left Stockholm in March to join up with the Sepals III' base.
March 1945 (Air)	Caldy I (2 nd Lt. Songe-Møller)	The objective was to protect various power stations and repeater stations in D.18, in southern Norway. The party was instructed to work for the District Leader and to have Milorg groups working for it.	This operation was instructed to take care of Høgefoss and Even Stadfoss power station, but little detail of this operation has survived.
March 1945 (Air)	Cormorant I (B. Stenseth)	To reinforce the District Leadership and increase the preparedness of the D14..3.	Dropped on the night of 3 March. Stenseth carried out further training in the area.
March 1945	Sepals Gorgon	(See above).	(See above).
March 1945 (Air & Stockholm)	Orm (B. Hansen, B. Sætre)	To establish a reception base centred on Trysil in eastern Norway.	The first party was dropped on 3 March and included a W/T operator. Radio contact was made with the UK and a group of four with the base leader, Captain Aasen, arrived from Sweden. Supplies were initially limited and a strong German presence meant a lot of the work continued from across the Swedish border. Nevertheless, co-operation with Milorg was good and supplies and further teams arrived from Stockholm. At the German surrender the Orm leadership with 75 men crossed the border. On 9 May they accepted the surrender from the local German commandant.
March 1945 (Sea)	Rook (L. Petteresen, C. Tønseth)	This was partly a plan, originally called Operation Tiger, to kidnap a German naval officer, <i>Kapitan zur see</i> , Hans Roesing, who it was believed was the authority behind U-boat operations out of Bergen. The party was also instructed to organise sabotage and intelligence groups to undertake the work previously carried out by Saborg and BAR.	Arrived on 11 March but failed to locate its target. The team worked closely with the Milorg DL and at the beginning of May made contact with the German commander in Bergen. On 8 May the Gestapo left the town and on 9 May around 1100 local men were mobilised and occupied the important points in the locality.
March 1945 (Stockholm)	Puffin (S. Blindheim)	(See above).	
March 1945 (Air-Stockholm)	Wren (K. J. Aarsæther, T. Baakind, A. Øvre, E. Sem-Jacobsen)	The original objective was to carry out sabotage against communication lines south of Steinkjer.	The plan was to drop the party but this did not happen and eventually it was sent to Stockholm. Toward the end of April the group, strengthened by six men trained in Sweden, went into Norway. By this stage it had been decided that its role should change to a series of protective tasks. At the end of April it was decided that Lt. G. Klem should join the party and its name was changed to 'Wren Antipodes' with the task of protecting Gudaa railway bridge. Whether or not Klem entered Norway is unclear.
March 1945 (Air)	Whinchat (R. Holter)	To reinforce the DL and increase the preparedness of the District.	Holter was to be dropped on the night of 22 March.
March 1945	Chaffinch (F. Solheim,	To work in D.17, in Telemark, to	This was the last expedition to this district

(Air)	O. Aas)	carry out instruction for Milorg groups in the area.	and training was undertaken over the following weeks.
March 1945 (Air)	Waxwing (12 men from the Norwegian Parachute Company)	The objective was to help with attempts to delay German withdrawals from northern Norway by attacking the railway between Grong and Majavatn, north of Trondheim.	The original plan was to drop a group of 24, but on the night of 24-25 March a party of only 12 was dropped under the command of Major Ole Jacob Bangstad. The 'Cramlington' party received them. On 15 April they attacked the railway 50-km north of Grong and destroyed 400 metres of line. On 21 April the group raided Namskogen station destroying crossings and switches. On 23 April the group blew up 800 yards of rail north of Trongfors. Bangstad returned to Stockholm at the end of April and the group moved to a base across the Swedish border. The group carried out work in the area after the German capitulation.
March 1945 (Air)	Rype (OSS operation)	The party under the command of Major William Colby was instructed to help delay German withdrawals by attacking the railway south of Grong in the county of Trøndelag.	Eight B-24 Liberators took off on 24 March carrying a total of 36 men. Only one Norwegian and 16 Americans were, however, eventually dropped. One plane dropped its group in Sweden and three planes returned to Scotland with their loads intact. The team was met by a reception party and eventually 'Rype' consisted of 16 Americans and 7 Norwegians. They established a base at Gjevsjøen and prepared operations. On 15 April the group blew up Tangen bridge, and on 25 April several sections of the railway in Lurudalen. The party left Gjevsjøen on 11 May and proceeded to Steinkjer, where they remained for several days.
April 1945	Ibrox/Quail (SAS team)	This was a plan to drop a party of 11 SAS soldiers and two Norwegians to attack the Snåsamoen bridge in north Trøndelag. 'Quail' was the reception party that would be sent from Stockholm.	Due to bad weather 'Ibrox' was cancelled at the beginning of April. The reception party had left Stockholm on 26 March and arrived at their destination on 30 March. They made radio contact but on 4 April they were forced back to Stockholm, where they arrived 3 days later.
April 1945	Medley (R. Larsen, K. Brodcorp-Danielsen)	To protect Bårdshaug sub-station and Berkåk repeater station in southern Trøndelag.	This operation was initially given to the 'Dodsworth' team. This team of four was, however, never used and its job was eventually taken over by the team that was to act as the reception party for 'Widgeon', a group of three that would undertake railway sabotage between Støren and Opdal. 'Widgeon' never arrived and therefore its reception party was renamed 'Medley' and took over the role originally allocated to 'Dodsworth'. It carried out its tasks at the capitulation.
April 1945	Antipodes	This was a plan to keep open the major routes into Norway from Sweden by protecting the bridges over the River Glomma in eastern Norway. Seven expeditions were set up in Stockholm and 6 UK officers were selected to assist Milorg and groups that were already in Norway.	Of the seven expeditions, all but two reached their destinations. The 'Wren', 'Clothall', and 'Sepals II' operations were also given an 'Antipodes' role and reinforced by additional officers. At least three officers also arrived in D.11 to assist Milorg in preparing for bridge protection. Milorg also made preparations in the border districts to protect key bridges.

April 1945	Polar Bear IV (D. Ånestad, B. Nilsen)	To protect Stavanger .	After the failure of the first operation this team was dropped at Årdal in southern Norway on 25 April. With the help of 'Osprey' they eventually arrived in Stavanger.
April 1945 (Stockholm)	Landrail (Capt. R. Kvaal, I. Fosseide, R. Arnesen)	This group was instructed to take over command of the many military groups operating in Trøndelag.	Crossed the border from Sweden on 5 May and reached Trondheim on the afternoon of 8 May.
April 1945 (Sea)	Bjørn West (A. Mathiesen)	(See above).	Further reinforcement.
April 1945 (Air)	Varg II (P. Vexels, O. Veraas, Capt. Christophersen)	(See above).	This party was dropped on 17 April and included the British liaison officer Captain Christophersen.
April 1945 (Sea)	Dipper (O. Walderhaug, H. Roald, R. Gathaw)	This group was instructed to organise and train local Milorg groups and lead the protection of power stations in sub-district 21..3.	Landed on the 21 April, but arrests in the area meant they returned and arrived back in the Shetlands two days later.
April 1945 (Air)	Chiffchaff I (E. Johnsen)	To carry out instruction in D.12.	Instruction was carried out until the end of the war.
April 1945 (Air)	Varg III (M. Sønneland, D. Sjørestad)	(See above).	The camp was eventually divided into four billeting areas. The first billeting area was eventually dropped because it had not received any supplies. The second billeting area was placed under Knut Haukelid. 'Varg' also became involved in counter-scorch operations, focusing on the power stations in the Arendal area. Significant weapons for up to 2000 men were dropped but there was still a lack of provisions and therefore the camp never really got going.
April 1945 (Sea)	Bjørn West VI (M. Eikanger)	(See above).	Further reinforcement.
April/May 1945 (Air)	Caldy II & III (A. Fjeld, J. Stumpf)	(See above).	The first operation was dropped on the night of 25-26 April and the second on 2-3 May, to protect Skerka and Nomeland power stations respectively.
May 1945 (Sea)	Ruff (H. Brandt)	The objective was to set up a W/T station on the coast around Sognefjord to improve communication with the reception committees that were organising the collection of supplies or pick-ups.	Landed on 4 May only a few days before the German capitulation.
May 1945 (Sea)	Stork (A. Rosenberg, J. Holvik, J. Heyerdahl-Larsen)	To organise and instruct groups around Sognefjord in weapons and guerrilla warfare, link up with existing groups, receive weapons, and prepare protection of local power stations and telephone exchanges.	Landed on 4 May.
May 1945 (Sea)	Skua (J. Wright-Flood)	To provide radio contact between the 'Siskin' group and	Landed on 4 May.

May 1945 (Sea)	Redpoll (G. Løken)	the UK. To establish a radio station on the coast in close to Bergen and in the vicinity of a suitable landing area in order to provide a speedy means of obtaining contact with reception committees.	Landed on 4 May.
May 1945 (Air-Stockholm)	Polar Bear V (G. Gundersen)	To cover the port of Kristiansand.	Gundersen was sent to Stockholm on 4 April from where he travelled by boat to Høvgå outside Kristiansand, arriving just before the capitulation. The Germans had made preparations to blow up the harbour but the local German commandant agreed that nothing would be carried out. Eventually, Gundersen with a group of 80 men took over the port.
May 1945	Polar Bear VII (H. Kristensen, I. Sklelbred)	To cover the ports of Ålesund and Veblungnes.	This was cancelled.
May 1945 (Sea)	Redbreast (R. Mathiesen)	The objective was to send a W/T operator to maintain W/T communication between the Bremnes and Stord area and the UK	By the time Mathiesen was sent in the German forces in Norway had capitulated
	Barming (G. Klem, P. Ihlen, J. Andreassen)	To protect sites in Kristiansand.	Never carried out. Milorg protected the objectives.
	Bracknell and Reproach	To protect various power stations sites on the Lofoten Islands.	Never carried out.

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¹ This bibliography begins with a list of the primary sources. This consists of documentary material from the British National Archives in Kew, West London and from the Norwegian Resistance Museum in Oslo, followed by details of the various private papers and oral interviews. The second part of the bibliography is made of published works, including periodical articles, and finally PhD theses.

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